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Wednesday, 25 June 2014, 10.10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Churkin/Mr. Pankin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. De Antueno
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Bertoux
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mrs. Kazragienė
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Republic of Korea	Ms. Paik Ji-ah
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2014/420)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2014/420)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Pakistan, Spain and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Kubiš, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Kabul.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/420, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kubiš.

Mr. Kubiš: The report of the Secretary-General of 18 June (S/2014/420) provides a comprehensive account of the events and trends of the recent quarter. It was finalized prior to the second round of polling on 14 June. I shall therefore provide an update on election-related events since then, which have prevented me from being pysically present in New York at the Security Council today.

The Council is meeting amid challenges that are testing Afghanistan's electoral, institutional and legal frameworks, together with the maturity of its political leaders. How the two presidential candidates, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah and Mr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, and the country's leadership manage those events and the current impasse will be vital to Afghanistan's unity and stability.

What keeps us hopeful in such challenging times is the very strong and encouraging statements of the Afghan people on the polling days of 5 April and 14 June. With pride and determination they turned out in support of a democratic political transition and an end to cycles of ruinous violence. The presidential and provincial council elections of 2014 are Afghan-held, Afghan-managed, Afghan-led and Afghan-secured. The electoral institutions are still maturing but the preparations for and conduct of the electoral cycle have been recognized by domestic and international observers as an improvement compared with the past. That is certainly not to suggest that there were not instances of fraud and irregularity.

At this time of the election impasse, the determination and sacrifice of the candidates, campaign workers, electoral personnel, security officials and voters must be at the forefront of the minds of Afghanistan's leaders. Millions of people came out to support each of the two candidates. Their votes and those wishes must be respected and protected. That the outcome of such an extraordinary effort is currently at an impasse makes it all the more disappointing and dangerous. It is the responsibility of the Afghan independent electoral management bodies and Afghan stakeholders, including, first and foremost, the candidates, to ensure the timely and orderly completion of the election process from which a legitimate leader emerges.

Soon after the second round of polling, citing institutional bias and substantial fraud, Mr. Abdullah chose to disengage from the electoral process. Accusations have centred around the high levels of turnout in some areas of the country, which Mr. Ghani's camp, in turn, put down to his team's mobilization efforts. The recent resignation of the Independent Election Commission's chief electoral officer was hoped to provide an opportunity for the resumption of the

process and, in particular, lead to discussions between the campaign teams and institutions on strengthening technical checks and balances where voting patterns are claimed to be unusual in increasing confidence in the credibility of the electoral process and the acceptability of its outcome.

The presidential candidates need to immediately engage with one another and the mandated electoral institutions in actively defining solutions to help the process move forward with improved quality and credibility. There is no political transition besides the elections to decide the country's legitimate leadership, accepted by the majority, and to protect its Constitution and the gains since the fall of the Taliban. Under the Council's mandate, the United Nations and I, myself, as Special Representative can and do provide good offices at the request of the Afghan authorities. We have received such requests recently.

I remain very clear, however, about the parameters of United Nations engagement. They are Afghan elections. We can facilitate Afghan parties reaching solutions. We can provide technical expertise to advise on the possibilies and modalities of strengthened checks and balances where there are questions about the process. What we cannot do is to prepare solutions and decide on behalf of the Afghans. That is the exclusive responsibility of Afghans. The United Nations efforts assist Afghan institutions and stakeholders. We cannot substitute for them or replace them.

Given the rising tensions following the second round, including increasing ethnic overtones, the utmost maturity and statesmanship are required, in particular by the two presidential candidates. Otherwise, the risk is a confrontation of the two condidates and their supporters, in which the losing side will reject the results and contest their legitimacy. That could lead to a protracted confrontation with the danger of a slide into violence. Afghanistan can ill afford the unpredictable impact on security, stability, the economy and the wider region. The candidates urgently need to cooperate with one another to prevent such scenarios, which, unfortunately, cannot be excluded for now.

In such times of tension, missteps, miscommunication, misunderstandings and the actions of a few radical people can have broader consequences. I appeal for calm among the supporters of both candidates amid sharpening, hateful rhetoric of an increasingly inflammatory tone that risks creating ethnic divisions. Most disturbingly, this includes rhetoric invoking memories of the fratricidal factional conflicts of the 1990s. All necessary steps need to be taken by the two leaders to avoid creating a slippery slope to civil disorder and instability.

The country's political class, and notably the two candidates Mr. Abdullah and Mr. Ghani, have a paramount responsibility to manage this situation. The wishes of the people for a timely conclusion of the leadership transition, in accordance with the country's laws, need to be respected. They must decisively and actively engage in finding solutions to end the current impasse and contribute to Afghanistan's forward momentum at this critical time. As with elections anywhere in the world, there can ultimately be only one winner. The need now is for statesmanship, not brinksmanship.

In challenging times, the predictability of international support is all the more critical. The upcoming sequence of high-level meetings is specifically seen as an opportunity to highlight and renew commitments with a new administration, including regional cooperation at the Heart of Asia/ Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference hosted by the People's Republic of China, ongoing international security assistance at the NATO Summit in Wales, and development priorities at the London Conference on Afghanistan. This will all depend on Afghanistan's political leaders and institutions breaking the electoral impasse and the completion of political transition in an orderly and timely manner.

Altogether, this reporting quarter has been both promising and challenging for Afghanistan. On the bright side is the people's participation and engagement in the election process. That was, however, dominated by economic downturn linked to a lack of confidence due to the current uncertainties; the activities of the insurgency and spoilers, including those linked to international terrorism and narcotics networks; the protracted electoral impasse; and deaths and displacement due to natural hazards and conflict. Just last week, an attempt was made on the life of the head of the High Peace Council secretariat, Masoom Stanekzai, an individual who has worked tirelessly for peace. Still the people of Afghanistan look towards a better future, and expect their leaders to work for it.

Finally, I would note that Afghanistan, together with the whole Umma, is preparing to observe the holy

month of Ramadan. I sincerely hope that the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, observed in a spirit of compassion, can in its own way through contemplation and prayers, help pave the way for a peaceful and prosperous future for a stable and united Afghanistan. To my respected colleague Ambassador Tanin, members of the Security Council and all peace-loving people, I address the traditional congratulations, *Ramadan Mubarak*.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Kubiš for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Fedotov.

Mr. Fedotov: I welcome today's initiative of the Security Council to discuss Afghanistan, and I am pleased to be here to provide a briefing together with my dear colleague Ján Kubiš to the assessment of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) of the current situation.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš was very clear about the risks and challenges facing the current election process in Afghanistan. The 2014 political and military transition is likely to create considerable political and security uncertainty, which must be addressed. At this crucial moment, Afghanistan needs continued international support. If its economic development declines and international aid is reduced, along with business confidence, the reliance on the illicit economy will further increase.

Over the past decade, drug cultivation and production have been the most profitable illicit and criminal business activities in Afghanistan. At UNODC, we estimate that the global opium market is worth some $68 billion, and 80 per cent of the world's opium and heroin is produced in Afghanistan. The narcotics trade may be worth between 10 to 15 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. In 2013, the area under poppy cultivation reached an historical high of 209,000 hectares. Opium production increased by 50 per cent, compared to 2012, rising to 5,500 tons.

Afghanistan remains at the centre of a multi-billion dollar illicit business that impacts on security, the rule of law, health and sustainable development. This is being driven not only by global consumption, but also by domestic speculation and corruption. The link between the lack of security and opium cultivation is also evident. 90 per cent of total opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan takes place in the southern and western provinces — the most insecure areas, where anti-Government elements and drug traders are extremely active. Money-laundering is hindering proper tax collection and creating an underresourced Government bereft of the financial means to confront illicit drugs. This is true on both the supply side and the demand side; the country has the highest rate of opium addiction in the world.

Unfortunately, these problems have not been concretely reflected in the Kabul and Tokyo processes. As a result, counter-narcotics efforts have not been given a high priority by national and international stakeholders. However, it would be unfair to say that nothing has been done to confront this challenge. Here are just a few facts and figures on the most recent developments.

Notwithstanding the election period and security concerns, the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan have continued with the eradication of opium crop in 12 provinces although the figure of 1,600 hectares eradicated from the beginning of the season to 2 June is down form previous years. In the period from January to December 2013, the Afghan Counter-Narcotics Police undertook 440 operations resulting in 383 arrests, dismantled two heroin laboratories, and seized 2.8 tons of opiates and 13.8 tons of precursor chemicals.

UNODC's role is to provide support and assistance to the relevant Afghan counter-narcotic authorities and to help them to do more. We are also building effective international cooperation and partnerships through such networks as the Regional Programme for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries; the Triangular Initiative, which brings together Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan; and the Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan (AKT) Initiative, while working closely with many regional organizations.

Ministerial review meetings have been held recently between the members of the AKT group and the Triangular Initiative, as well as the Steering Committee of the Regional Programme, to further strengthen cooperation in countering illicit drugs and in border management among countries of West and Central Asia. The Triangular Initiative, in particular, has already produced concrete results in terms of several tons of drugs seized; even more importantly, it has made it possible for those three countries to engage in constructive cooperation at the operational level.

UNODC is continuing to support law enforcement operations in the region through new initiatives, such

as the Criminal Assets Southern Hub, the Southern Trafficking Operational Plan and the Maritime Regional Security Initiative. Furthermore, UNODC is promoting drug control cooperation at the interregional level to assist countries in countering transnational organized crime and drug trafficking rings involved in the Afghan opiates trade.

In that context, we are supporting the linkages between counter-narcotics intelligence-sharing centres such as the Joint Planning Cell, under the Triangular Initiative, and other regional centres, including the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre, the Gulf Criminal Information Center to Combat Drugs, the Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre and many others. To cement that process, last year UNODC launched its "networking the networks" initiative, which brings together regional centres to enhance criminal intelligence and to collaborate in operations along the main trafficking routes used for shipping drugs and precursors to and from Afghanistan.

Despite the work of the international community, much more needs to be done. Afghanistan needs a meaningful action plan that takes a long term development, peace and security approach — one that is coupled with an effective drug control effort that is able to balance its different components of supply and demand reduction and alternative development and that mainstreams action against drug lords and criminality into work promoting sustainable economic and social development. A more comprehensive approach is needed in three key areas.

First, there is a need to reduce the vulnerability of citizens to the illicit economy through improvements to the quality of their lives, including in the areas of health care, education and job creation. Of course, alternative development is an essential tool in those efforts that can help farmers to permanently move away from illicit crop farming. But that will succeed only if we also provide licit markets for substitution crops and improve upon existing infrastructure.

Secondly, we must remove the opportunities for criminals by focusing on good governance, the rule of law and anti-money laundering and anti-corruption activities. Those issues are a fundamental element of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. Nevertheless, there is still a great need to turn the text of the framework into concrete action so that we can eliminate corruption in Afghan society and its institutions and sever the flow of money from this crime.

Thirdly, we have to generate the political will that can introduce a long-term engagement that binds together the United Nations family as well as the relevant international and national stakeholders. The 2016 special session of the General Assembly could also help at the international level by reviewing the achievements and challenges in countering the world drug problem, including in Afghanistan.

Allow me assure the Security Council that UNODC will continue to support Afghanistan in fighting drugs and crime and will further promote regional and interregional cooperation in an integrated and comprehensive response to illicit drugs.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Fedotov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for briefing the council via video teleconference and for his leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, especially at this very important juncture in my country's history. I thank him in particular for his continued commitment to Afghanistan throughout its transition. I also welcome the presence here today of Mr. Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. I am grateful to Australia, in particular to Ambassador Quinlan, for its continued leadership on Afghanistan in the Council. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2014/420) on the situation in Afghanistan.

This is a pivotal moment for Afghanistan. We are at the last stage of our country's historic presidential elections. The democratic transition is the cornerstone of the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned progression to peace, stability and prosperity.

The Presidential elections on 5 April and on 14 June generated an unprecedented surge of democratic spirit in Afghanistan. After decades of conflict, it is remarkable to witness my country emerging as a vibrant young democracy characterized by widespread engagement in the political process. That has been demonstrated by rallies attended by thousands, debates

that were broadcast and viewed throughout the country, media coverage and information exchange via phones, computers and television screens, and candidates' public outreach, not only in the capital but, significantly, country-wide.

In an exceptional show of faith in democracy, Afghans cast their ballots despite intimidation by the Taliban and other extremist and terrorist groups so that they could have a say in the country's political destiny. They dipped their fingers in ink, boldly asserting their right to choose a leader in defiance of threats to their lives and safety. In doing so they voted not only for a candidate but also for peace, for the advancement of the gains made in the past 12 years and for a better future.

They did so by the millions, in numbers that exceeded expectations in both the first and second rounds. All segments of the population participated, including women and all ethnic groups, in all provinces of the country, in the cities and in the rural areas and in the south, north, east and west.

Dozens of national institutions and thousands of citizens played a role in ensuring the administration, integrity and legitimacy of the first entirely Afghan-managed electoral process. Thousands of independent domestic and international observers and candidate monitors covered the polling stations and continue to oversee the entire electoral cycle.

We are grateful to the international community for standing with the Afghan people and for providing technical, financial and logistical resources to enable Afghan institutions to successfully hold elections. We appreciate the support of the United Nations, including the United Nations Development Programme, to national electoral institutions in their management of a peaceful democratic transition.

We note with pride the professionalism and competence exhibited by Afghan security institutions during the elections period. Their dedication allowed elections to take place despite serious security threats. Moreover, careful planning including through the training of hundreds of female police and more than 2,000 civilians and the recruitment of more than 13,000 female searchers, allowed for the active participation of diverse segments of the population on polling day.

We were deeply saddened by the tragic loss and injury of civilians, election personnel, observers and Afghan security forces who put their lives at risk to protect the future of the country. We deplore the attacks against the infrastructure of election institutions, including the central office of the Independent Election Commission in Kabul and even attacks on candidates and their supporters. However, the Afghan people's near-blanket defiance of extremist threats sends a strong message that the Taliban no longer have the ability to destabilize the country. Despite the tragic losses suffered during the elections, peace and democracy have clearly triumphed in Afghanistan.

We note the steps that have been taken by the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission to detect fraudulent votes and manage complaints in the first round, including through the blacklisting of electoral workers liable for infractions. Attempting to avoid potential crisis and protect the legitimacy of our historic elections, the election bodies are again managing issues raised with regard to the electoral process in the second round. Their efforts aim to ensure the integrity and transparency of the electoral process and uphold constitutional and electoral law.

We appreciate the readiness of the United Nations to stand up for the interests of the Afghan people by supporting the integrity of the Afghan-led, Afghan-managed electoral process, which will lead to the establishment of a new Government that legitimately reflects the will of the Afghan people. We see United Nations support of the Afghan process as a positive step towards addressing the political concerns of the second round.

As Afghanistan makes the transition for the first time from one democratically elected president to the next, we continue to focus on the steps necessary for the country to move decisively towards full ownership and leadership in the transformation decade. Afghan security institutions are assuming full responsibility throughout the country as combat operations by the international forces near their conclusion. The future elected President of Afghanistan will continue to make a constructive relationship with our international partners a priority, starting by signing a bilateral security agreement with the United States and followed by the finalization of the agreement on NATO's training, advising and assistance role in post-2014 Afghanistan. In that regard, we look forward to the upcoming NATO summit in Cardiff on 4 September.

The country's progress towards sustainability and self-sufficiency depends upon the ability of Afghan institutions to perform key governance and

service-delivery functions and promote economic development. That will require the continued support and assistance of the international community, as set out in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework adopted in Tokyo in 2012. We welcome the next ministerial meeting under the Framework, to be held in London in November 2014, as a forum for renewing and reinvigorating the mutual commitments necessary for Afghanistan's long-term prosperity.

As Afghanistan moves towards a new beginning, the interlinked challenges of achieving security, peace, good governance and development will continue to loom large. We were reminded of long-term challenges to development last month by the devastating floods in Badakhshan province. In addition, we recognize that illegal drugs and narcotics continue to undercut our legitimate development path. For that reason, we will continue to implement our National Drug Control Strategy and call on our regional and international partners to focus on solutions that reduce demand and combat regional and global illicit networks.

Understanding that terrorism and extremism continue to be the greatest impediment to development in Afghanistan and the region, we will continue to focus on peace and reconciliation efforts with the Taliban and on other measures, including the Anti-Money Laundering law recently passed by the upper house of the Afghan National Parliament. The active role of all citizens — women, men and children — will be vital for overcoming our shared challenges in that regard.

Regional engagement will continue to be critical to the peace, stability and success of the transformation decade. We believe that it is important to build upon the achievements of the last decade to solidify and expand a workable framework of bilateral and multilateral mechanisms with our neighbours and the wider region and to strengthen relations with the Islamic world. To that end, we look forward to the upcoming Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference to be held in Tianjin, China, on 29 August.

As Afghanistan expands its multifaceted cooperation with our regional partners, we expect our neighbours to continue to work towards regional stability. The recent operation of Pakistani forces in North Waziristan, which led to the displacement of thousands of families to Afghanistan's Khost province and the associated loss of life, is a serious source of concern for the Government of Afghanistan. We urge the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to give high priority to the greater security of Afghanistan and the region at this crucial time.

The Afghan Government is committed to a swift and successful conclusion of the electoral process. Preparations are well under way for the first ever democratic and peaceful transfer of power in Afghanistan. All Government institutions have commenced their transition planning, and an interministerial committee has been assigned to prepare for the official inauguration of our incoming president. We look forward to welcoming the dignitaries of all our international and regional partners to that occasion.

When we do so, we will remember that Afghanistan and our international partners have made tremendous sacrifices to ensure that war remains a relic of the past. It is essential that the country not return to the days when bullets rather than ballots decided the country's political fate. In post-Taliban Afghanistan, no tenet has been more cherished than the idea that stability and legitimacy are a profound necessity. That principle has motivated considerable investment in terms of dollars spent and lives lost, and its curtailment would carry damaging consequences for the country and its people. It is our fundamental responsibility to ensure that peace and democracy are secure in Afghanistan today, tomorrow and throughout the transformation decade.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I thank Special Representative Ján Kubiš for his briefing and commend him and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for critical support for Afghanistan's presidential election. I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Yury Fedotov, for his briefing, and Ambassador Tanin, as always, for his able engagement in the Council's work on Afghanistan.

The conclusion of voting in the Afghan presidential elections was a vital stage in Afghanistan's transition. The Afghan people themselves defied attempts by armed insurgent groups to disrupt the process and have spoken decisively in favour of democracy. We applaud their courage and their commitment to a peaceful Afghanistan. The strong participation of women reflects the progress Afghanistan has made over the last 10 years. Afghanistan's future will depend on the full and decisive role women have in its political, economic and civic evolution.

Today, the Security Council will adopt a presidential statement on Afghanistan's elections. That will send a strong message of the international community's support for Afghanistan's electoral process and will recognize the importance of those historic elections for Afghanistan's transition and democratic development. We recognize the outstanding work of UNAMA in assisting Afghan institutions in their management of the process. The partnership between the United Nations and the Government of Afghanistan has been crucial in successfully managing the many administrative and logistical challenges of conducting the poll.

We are now at a critical point in the electoral process. We recognize the importance of the Afghan electoral institutions, including the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission, in ensuring a transparent, open and credible result, and we call on all parties to engage with the electoral institutions and processes patiently and to channel their complaints through the institutional mechanisms established by Afghanistan's electoral laws and Constitution. The performance of Afghanistan's election institutions and processes is integral to the credibility of the elections themselves.

The months ahead will be crucial. Beyond the elections, we look forward to the historic milestone of a peaceful, democratic transfer of leadership in Afghanistan. Australia is ready, with our partners, to work with the new Government to finalize the parameters for the international community's support for Afghanistan beyond 2014.

The Afghan National Security Forces have demonstrated their increasing capability in fighting the insurgency and providing security for the Afghan people, including, vitally, throughout the election process itself. The Afghan National Security Forces must continue to build their capabilities across Afghanistan. Australia will continue to support the Afghan National Security Forces, including through our sustainment commitment of $100 million a year, as agreed in Chicago in 2012. We look forward to concluding the legal frameworks necessary to enable a post-2014 international mission to train, advise and assist.

It will be essential for the new Government to implement the commitments made at the 2012 Tokyo conference towards achieving sustainable economic and social development. The people of Afghanistan will expect to see improvements to governance and the rule of law, including in the areas of transitional justice, budget management, combating corruption and improving accountability.

We encourage Afghan authorities to provide full support to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission so that it can fulfil its necessary role as an effective and independent institution. Australia urges the full implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women and encourages the Government of Afghanistan to finalize and implement a national action plan on women and peace and security that would promote the active participation of women in the peace and reconciliation process. We welcome Afghanistan's report on the implementation of its children and armed conflict plan and emphasize the need for its full implementation.

We are concerned with the reported increase in civilian casualties in Afghanistan, the vast majority of which are attributed to the Taliban. The Secretary-General's report (S/2014/420) notes that improvised explosive devices (IEDs) remain the main cause of civilian casualties. We are concerned by the growing use and sophistication of IEDs and the terrible toll they take, particularly on civilians. The Council has already taken steps to address that trend in resolution 2160 (2014), adopted last week, on the new mandate of the Taliban sanctions regime, which imposes a new obligation on States to promote vigilance in industries involved in the production, trade and storage of explosives or the raw materials and components that can be used to manufacture IEDs, such as chemical components and detonating cord.

It is essential that Member States engage in establishing good practices, including with industry, and share information, establish partnerships and develop national strategies and capabilities to counter the use of improvised explosive devices. Crucially, we must not lose sight of Afghanistan's significant humanitarian challenges, including significant displacement as a result of conflict and recent natural disasters.

Today, the Council will also adopt a presidential statement on narcotics, which is an issue of great concern to many countries, including my own. We thank UNODC for its continued efforts to build the capacity of Afghan authorities to counter the very serious narcotics threat. That role will remain important.

To conclude, Afghanistan stands at the threshold of transformation. Its people have voted peacefully for change, respecting and trusting the democratic process

to bring them greater peace and security. We can ensure them that the United Nations, the international community and certainly my own country, Australia, will continue to support them and the Government of Afghanistan as they work to achieve the stability and legitimacy that Ambassador Tanin has just so sharply identified as the motivating principles behind the commitment of Afghanistan's people to their own future.

Mr. Barros Melet (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mr. Ján Kubiš, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Yury Fedotov. We also welcome the detailed statement by Ambassador Zahir Tanin.

We welcome the holding of the presidential and provincial council elections on 5 April and the second round of polling in the run-off between Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai on 14 June. We note the Government's efforts to promote and strengthen female participation, either as candidates, voters or observers and applaud the 36 per cent participation rate by women in the 5 April elections.

A legitimate political transition based on a result that is accepted by candidates and voters is essential for the stability of Afghanistan. We once again stress the need for the process to be credible, transparent, inclusive and in full compliance with the legal and constitutional framework set out by the country's own National Assembly. We also highlight the important work of the Independent Election Commission and UNAMA to verify that that is the case.

Progress on human rights, especially the rights of women and girls, is a decisive factor in the country's stability. It is important that resolution 1325 (2000) continue to be implemented at all levels to ensure women's participation in decision-making and that their needs are adequately met. In that vein, including women in the police and security forces is important and should continue to be a priority task for the new authorities. It is equally crucial that the new Government ensure the full implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women in order to end impunity for those who commit violence against Afghan women.

The increasing number of civilian deaths and injuries in Afghanistan caused by the use of improvised explosive devices shows there are still serious security problems in the country. The number of events and victims is at the worst levels since 2011. Given that, we firmly support the new provisions on such explosive devices contained in resolution 2160 (2014), adopted by the Council on 17 June, which are aimed at reducing their production, propagation and use.

In addition, together with Mr. Yury Fedotov, we are alarmed by the increase in drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan, where last year a new record was set in the production of opium. We reiterate the need for a comprehensive and international approach in the fight against drug trafficking that includes actors involved in security, development and humanitarian issues.

We deplore the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the north as a result of the heavy seasonal rains and extend our solidarity to Ambassador Tanin with respect to the resulting significant loss of life. In the context of a conflict that has spanned decades, ongoing vulnerability to natural disasters, the situation of internally displaced persons and food insecurity are major humanitarian challenges that need to be addressed in a coordinated manner by the newly elected authorities and the international community. That will not be possible without ensuring the full, prompt and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel.

We are concerned that terrorism in its various forms and manifestations has increased with the elections, and we condemn the attack on presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah on 7 June. With the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force at the end of 2014, my country believes it will be necessary to continue building the capacities of the Afghan National Security Forces in order to address the emerging threats and challenges. That will require greater resolve with regard to the current uncertainties that prevail in Afghanistan.

A specific example in that regard is the bilateral security agreement between Afghanistan and the United States of America. Both presidential candidates have committed to subscribing to that agreement, if elected. It is also important that the new Government establish stronger regional cooperation networks through multilateral processes, such as the Istanbul process and the Toyko Conference. Regional cooperation is also essential for peace and reconciliation, as are the contacts with the Taliban and other groups that continue

to fight the Government. It is essential that the next Government has the necessary stability to carry out an orderly transition.

In conclusion, I should like to express Chile's support for the efforts of the Afghan people in building a democratic State with the rule of law and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. That is vital both for the stability and development of Afghanistan as for the stability of the entire region.

Mr. Manzi (Rwanda): At the outset, let me thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), and Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, for their respective briefings. I also thank Afghan Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his statement.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the leadership and the entire team of UNAMA for the important and vital role they played in the recently concluded elections in Afghanistan. UNAMA has made a remarkable contribution in accompanying Afghanistan on its road to State-building and socioeconomic stability. With the elections in Afghanistan marking the first Afghan transition from one democratically elected President to another, we congratulate the Afghans and their partners on achieving this milestone. The enthusiastic voter participation in two rounds of votes held on 5 April and 14 June demonstrated the strong need of the Afghan people for a democratic process. We are fully aware that many Afghans are eagerly awaiting the election results at the end of the election process so that normal life can resume in their country, given how long it has taken.

As we await the announcement of the official results, scheduled on 22 July, it is important that voters and candidates exercise maximum patience and respect for the electoral process and mandate of the authorities. We appeal to the candidates and their supporters to refrain from inciting violence, as the country is still in a state of fragility. We also stress that whoever wins must be aware that an inclusive governance of the country's diversity is vital to the long-term stability of Afghanistan in promoting reconciliation and national unity.

The security situation in Afghanistan remains volatile. With an increase of 22 per cent in security-related incidents, compared to the same period last year, Rwanda commends the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) for the consistent progress they have made in ensuring national security. They have proved their growing capability to respond to security challenges, and we specifically commend their efforts during the election period. We know that by the end of the year, the ANSF will have full responsibility for the security of Afghanistan as the International Security Assistance Force draws down. It is therefore important that the international community continue to support and enhance the capability of the Afghan National Security Force.

National reconciliation is also at an unavoidable crossroads on the path towards the lasting stabilization of the country. Rwanda supports an inclusive and peaceful initiative, and recognizes the importance of the process being Afghan-led and Afghan-owned. In that regard, the contribution of regional actors to achieving sustainable peace and stability, including by supporting the inter-Afghan dialogue, is of paramount importance. The strong support of UNAMA for the High Peace Council in confidence- and trust-building has also been indispensable.

We underscore the importance of the general mutual commitment made at the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan of July 2012 as an indispensable tool for guiding cooperation between Afghanistan and its development partners. The implementation of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework is fundamental to the long-term stability and future success of Afghanistan. We encourage the Afghan authorities to honour their commitments in the areas of promoting good governance, implementing the necessary reforms, fighting corruption and protecting human rights. On that note, we recognize the significant progress that has been made in the process.

Narcotics remain a key problem in Afghanistan and beyond. They are a threat to international peace and security. Continued efforts to suppress drug trafficking would enable the Council to effectively fight against drug-financed terrorism and criminality. No concrete results have been attained to date, due to lack of serious joint efforts on the part of all the stakeholders in the region to curtail its production.

We welcome the draft presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/12) on drug trafficking that the Security Council shall adopt shortly, which fully expresses the position of the Council on the issue and supports the existing regional, interregional and international

mechanisms in the fight against illicit drugs. We hope that it will contribute to the fight against the scourge of illicit drugs.

In conclusion, let me say that Afghanistan institutions have a great role to play in ensuring that their transition is successful, that the progress made is self-guided and forms the basis for Afghanistan's future peace, security, growth and development. We will continue to advocate that UNAMA, the United Nations system as a whole and the international community continue to accompany Afghans towards their aspirations.

Mrs. Kazragienė (Lithuania): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ján Kubiš and Executive Director Fedotov of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for their briefings.

Lithuania aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States.

The 2014 presidential election was an historic moment for Afghanistan, its transition and democratic development. We pay tribute to the people of Afghanistan for their courage in casting their ballots despite threats and attacks by the Taliban and other extremist and terrorist groups. The people of Afghanistan have proven that votes, not violence, count. In particular, we commend Afghan women for their determination, in the face persistent stigmatization, to have their rightful say in the election and to engage more actively in the country's political life. Among the teams of candidates in the first round, three included female vice-presidential candidates. It is encouraging that there were almost 300 women among Provincial Council aspirants and that, according to the preliminary results, 97 of them are winners.

It is critical that the will of the people be reflected. The work of the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission will be important in the days ahead. We urge the remaining candidates to engage constructively with the electoral institutions and refrain from any acts that could incite violence or civil disorder or that could lead to instability. Once complaints have been considered in accordance with the law, we urge them to accept the outcome.

We welcome the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and its engagement with the Afghan authorities and people during the run-up to the elections and while they were being held. The EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe deployed their election observation teams. We urge the Afghan leadership to make full use of their observations for future elections.

We commend the efforts of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in ensuring security during the elections, which demonstrated its growing ability to carry out large-scale security operations and provide effective country-wide security. I want particularly to underline the ANSF's role in protecting women and providing a favourable environment for their participation in the elections.

However, the security situation remains a source of concern and a challenge for the new leadership of Afghanistan. Civilians continue to be caught in fighting between the Government and the armed opposition. We are especially worried about the increase in civilian causalities, which include women and children. Once again, explosive weapons have been the leading cause of civilian casualties, with improvised explosive devices standing out as weapons of particular concern. During the past three months, more than 100 children have been killed or wounded as they stumbled upon ordnance, which is often poorly marked. We also note with concern the growing number of incidents in the east of the country carried out by a range of Al-Qaida affiliates working parallel to the Taliban.

International assistance in support of the Afghan army and police will remain essential during and beyond the transition period. We reiterate our support for the transition and look forward to the swift conclusion of the status-of-forces agreement by the country's new leadership. Lithuania has pledged to contribute in support of the ANSF after 2014.

We also note that only scant progress has been achieved in the dialogue between the Government and the armed opposition. Those efforts need to continue, including on the local level, where they are most effective. We welcome UNAMA's engagement in facilitating local dialogue and peace initiatives, including through community efforts in Nuristan and by launching the latest report of the Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace.

A stable, secure, economically sustainable Afghanistan can be built only based on the rule of law, strengthened democratic institutions and the implementation of citizens' rights. Progress in the Afghan human rights situation, however, remains

limited. We are especially concerned that children's rights continue to be gravely violated, as reported by the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting on Children and Armed Conflict. We express our grave concern that schools continue to be attacked by parties to the conflict, teachers continue to be threatened and more than 100,000 children continue to be deprived of their right to education. We call upon the Afghan authorities to endorse a road map to enhance the implementation of the children in armed conflict action plan.

We welcome the reinstatement of provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code that enable women to testify against relatives. We also welcome the measures taken for tracking enforcement of the law on the elimination of violence against women, and for tracking civilian casualties disaggregated by gender. However, further efforts are required to promote and advance human rights. UNAMA has an important further role to play in that regard. The independence and effectiveness of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission should be ensured.

Regional cooperation is essential for developing a stable and prosperous Afghanistan, since today's challenges know no borders. We are heartened by the support and determination of the States in the region, including through the Istanbul Heart of Asia Process. Afghanistan's grave economic situation, illicit economy and the issue of combating drug trafficking will all continue to require urgent attention.

Finally, given the multitude of challenges, UNAMA will remain an essential partner of the Government of Afghanistan in ensuring the success of the transformation process, maintaining the progress that has been made and supporting much needed reforms. Afghanistan has Lithuania's full support in its further efforts.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I also thank Special Representatieve of the Secretary-General Ján Kubiš and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yury Fedotov, for their briefings. And I acknowledge the presence of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Zahir Tanin, and thank him for his statement.

My comments will focus on three aspects of the situation in Afghanistan: political developments, humanitarian issues and counter-narcotics efforts.

On political developments, we note with satisfaction that, despite the Taliban's threats to launch a campaign of violence to disrupt the recent elections, millions of voters turned out to cast their ballots. According to the Secretary-General's report (S/2014/420), a series of televised debates between the presidential candidates and local mobilization around the provisional council elections contributed to civic awareness and a high voter turnout. That is a clear indication that the people of Afghanistan have embraced democracy. We congratulate them on the success of the elections and look forward to the announcement of the final results next month. In the meantime, we urge the candidates to refrain from inflammatory rhetoric and other acts that could endanger the national security of Afghanistan.

In terms of gender and women's empowerment, we are pleased to note that all the campaign platforms addressed women's issues. Three teams had women as vice-presidential candidates and 296 of the 2,591 candidates to provincial council elections were women. In order to encourage the participation of women in voting, the Government trained 581 female police and 2,245 women in addition to recruiting 13,690 female searchers for the elections. Women also have a legally mandated 20 per cent of the seats in the provisional councils across the country. Of the 362,780 party and candidate agents registered for the first round of the elections, 23 per cent were women. Viewed against the recent history of women's limited participation in Afghan politics, that level of involvement in politics by Afghan women is highly significant. It shows the extent to which women have been empowered in Afghanistan. We would like to acknowledge the support of the United Nations to the electoral process in Afghanistan through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the United Nations electoral support project.

On humanitarian issues, we take positive note of the approval by the Internally Displaced Persons Task Force of a road map for the implementation of a national policy on internally displaced persons (IDPs). We hope that this will enhance the management of the IDP problem in Afghanistan. We are concerned, however, by the constraints that are hampering humanitarian access. Those include attacks against personnel, assets and facilities. Some of those attacks have resulted in the deaths of humanitarian personnel. We pay tribute to the members of the humanitarian community working across Afghanistan under challenging circumstances.

On counter-narcotics, we commend the Afghan authorities for their efforts in fighting drugs production and trafficking. The eradication of 1,473 hectares of opium poppy is a significant achievement in the Government's war on drugs. Since criminal gangs and terrorist groups are known to fund their activities through drug production and trafficking, the efforts of the Afghan Government in fighting those crimes would deny them a source of funds and, it is hoped, reduce their capacity to organize.

Still on counter-narcotics, we understand that there is almost always a regional dimension to drug trafficking. That makes international cooperation an essential part of an overall strategy of drug-law enforcement. In that regard, Nigeria welcomes the progress made within the framework of the regional programme for Afghanistan and countries in the region in the areas of law enforcement, criminal justice, demand reduction and research advocacy.

We also take positive note of the progress achieved under the regional cooperation frameworks, including the Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Initiative and the Triangular Initiative, involving Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. The positive outcomes of those initiatives include enhanced cooperation in drug control, border management and law enforcement. We encourage the Afghan authorities to strengthen counter-narcotics cooperation with their neighbours to consolidate the gains made in the war on drugs.

I wish to conclude by commending Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš for his leadership and commitment to attaining his mandate. Our commendation also goes to the staff of UNAMA for their hard work in challenging circumstances. Our wish is to see a peaceful, prosperous, stable and democratic Afghanistan.

Mrs. DiCarlo (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš for his informative briefing. I also thank him and his entire team at the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their steadfast and professional work supporting the Afghan people and their Government at this critically important juncture.

I welcome Executive Director Fedotov of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to the Council today, and thank him very much for his briefing.

Once again, I thank Ambassador Tanin for his presence and for his remarks.

We are meeting at an historic time for Afghanistan. Millions of Afghans have gone out to vote not once, but twice, in recent months, in an election that will eventually determine the first democratic transfer of power the country has ever seen. It has been an act of immense courage on the part of Afghan voters, who braved real threats to assert their most basic democratic right. And, I would argue, there are reasons to be optimistic beyond the ink on millions of people's fingers. Many of the Afghan institutions that have developed over the past decade played a key role in the electoral process. Presidential candidates engaged in vigorous televised debates that raised public awareness of their positions. Their campaigns were covered by a maturing and independent national press. Nearly 70 Afghan organizations fielded more than 18,000 observers to increase transparency, and Afghan security forces provided security throughout the process.

Perhaps no one has seen a bigger change than Afghanistan's women. Under Taliban rule, Afghan women were completely excluded from public life. This year, more than 2.5 million women cast ballots in the first round of voting. But that is not all. Female election observers monitored polling stations and women ran for and won seats on provincial councils. The Afghan people can be proud of that progress.

Even as we recognize steps forward, we are mindful of the challenges that remain. One of those challenges is evaluating allegations of electoral fraud. To that end, we urge both candidates to remain engaged with Afghanistan's electoral institutions — the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission — and to present them with any evidence of fraud. We call on those institutions to ensure that all allegations they receive are given prompt, thorough and impartial review and adjudication, and we call on all stakeholders to refrain from violence and to condemn violent acts if and when they occur. Further, we believe that UNAMA can play a critically important role in facilitating that process and in maintaining the dialogue between the candidates and the Afghan electoral bodies.

Without regard to which candidate emerges victorious, the United States is committed to working with the next President of Afghanistan in order to help the Afghan people build a more stable, peaceful and prosperous country. That is why President Obama announced last month that we are ready to keep approximately 9,800 United States service members

in Afghanistan at the start of 2015. Those troops will help to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Security Forces as part of the NATO Resolute Support mission and pursue the remnants of Al-Qaida. That support depends on the conclusion of the bilateral security agreement that both Afghan candidates have committed to signing.

International assistance will remain vital to ensuring Afghanistan's future stability. The Afghan people can be confident that the United States will do its part to provide long-term, multifaceted support. That will include financial assistance for sustaining and professionalizing the Afghan National Security Forces, humanitarian aid to tackle endemic problems such as the country's massive displaced population, and key investments in Afghan institutional and economic development. That support will be critical to shoring up the gains made over the past decade.

Afghanistan will also need the help of its neighbours. Just as a more stable Afghanistan is essential to security in the region, so is the region's enduring engagement in building peace and stability in Afghanistan. It is important that regional partners continue to promote Afghanistan's development through initiatives such as the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan. In that regard, we recognize China's leadership in hosting the forthcoming Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference in August.

Afghanistan's progress will also depend on continuing international support for a robust UNAMA mission so that the United Nations can continue to work on crucial issues ranging from coordinating humanitarian aid to fostering regional diplomacy, and from monitoring human rights practices to supporting the development of key institutions such as the justice system. We look forward to discussing the future of that mission with the new Afghan Government and with Security Council colleagues.

Let me be clear — outside support alone cannot guarantee that Afghanistan will realize its full potential. Ultimately, the hardest choices about the country's future will fall on the shoulders of its leaders, who will need to build upon the important gains made over the past decade. As the bravery and determination of the Afghan people in the recent election have shown, Afghans are willing to take great risks in order to build a more stable, peaceful and prosperous country. We must continue to support them.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Ján Kubiš, for his briefing and for his work as Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Yury Fedotov, and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, for their statements.

I associate myself with the statement to be delivered later by the observer of the European Union.

When men and women act with courage, there will always be other men and women who will walk in their footsteps. On 5 April and 14 June, braving considerable risks, Afghan men and women chose the path to the polls, and millions followed them. Despite intimidation, threats and even violence, the Afghan people showed their determination to take control of their future and their destiny, by choosing the path of peace and democracy. Their courage and determination compel admiration and deserve praise, as do the actions of the Afghan security forces, who were able to ensure the security of the ballot despite attempts to disrupt the conduct of the voting through violence.

Today it is crucial that the Afghan voters see their courage rewarded and their hopes for these elections not disappointed. We therefore appeal to the sense of responsibility of everyone involved — the candidates, who should cooperate with the institutions in charge of the electoral process and respect their authority, and the institutions themselves, which should fulfil their tasks transparently and efficiently. If disputes arise, they should be dealt with within the legal framework provided for the purpose, not through the media or by intimidation or violence.

On 22 July, when the electoral process is complete and the final results are declared, there will be a winner and a loser. But the whole of Afghanistan will emerge a winner if the defeated candidate chooses to concede defeat with dignity, adding to the legitimacy of the elected President. And the entire Afghan people will be victorious if the elected candidate chooses to form an inclusive Government that represents Afghanistan's diversity. It is only then that these elections will have contributed to creating the conditions required for Afghanistan to progress along the road to stability, democracy and peace.

It is essential that the electoral process be brought to a successful conclusion. But there must be advances in other areas too in order to consolidate the progress Afghanistan has made in the past decade, starting with human and women's rights. We hope the future Head of State will allocate significant spots in his Government to women and seriously promote their active participation in the peace and reconciliation process. We also hope the new executive branch will ensure the full implementation of the law on violence against women. The level of women's participation in the 2015 parliamentary elections will be a good measure of the evolution of their place in public life.

On the issue of children in armed conflict, we are pleased that the Afghan Government has presented its third report to the United Nations on its implementation of the action plan on the recruitment and use of children in its national security forces. We have no doubt that the Government will very soon adopt the road map developed jointly with the United Nations aimed at speeding up the action plan's implementation. We are grateful that the Secretary-General's report (S/2014/420) includes information on all the violations and abuses committed against children in Afghanistan as well as on the implementation of the action plan. We thank the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for its well-produced brochure on the protection of Afghan children in armed conflict. We urge that it be distributed as widely as possible.

The continued increase in the number of civilian casualties in the conflict is a matter for serious concern. We firmly condemn the indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations, which show that one of the chief challenges to be tackled is that of security in general and the protection of civilians in particular. Regarding security, many members of the international community, including Luxembourg, have expressed their willingness to remain engaged with the Afghan people and security forces after 2014. For that, it is essential to clear up any legal uncertainty surrounding future international missions in support of the Afghan security forces. In so doing, Afghanistan will send a strong signal to its partners about the firmness of its commitment. We commend the Permanent Representative's remarks this morning in that regard.

The resurgence of drug trafficking and the cultivation of opiates in Afghanistan is another cause for deep concern. This serious and complex problem should be tackled head on, not just for the obvious public health reasons but also because there are often links between the forces of insurgency and drug-related activities. Meeting this challenge will require the commitment of everyone, primarily in Afghanistan but also at the regional level and in the international community. For its part, Luxembourg welcomes every initiative aimed at promoting synergies between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNAMA.

This is also the moment to recall that the drug issue cannot be separated from the development of the Afghan economy in general. If opium cultivation is gaining ground, that is due partly to the lack of economic alternatives. One of the new Government's priorities should unquestionably be to take measures to promote growth and create jobs. This is also where the mutual accountability commitments made at the Tokyo Conference should come into the picture. Maintaining international financial support should go hand in hand with a commitment on the part of the Afghan Government to economic reforms, the rule of law, development-oriented governance and the fight against corruption.

In conclusion, I would like to express our appreciation to the staff of UNAMA for the outstanding work they do in a dangerous and difficult environment. At this crucial time, it is important that it has the means to maintain a presence in the provinces as close to the Afghan people as possible.

Mr. Hmoud (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan, for his briefing, as well as the personnel of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for their dedication under dangerous conditions. I would also like to thank Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for his briefing, and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement earlier.

Through their courageous participation in historic elections, the Afghan people have expressed their commitment to the political process, their rejection of violence and their resolve to work steadily to advance the process of democracy. In that regard, Jordan would like to commend the people's broad participation in the first round of voting despite terrorist threats. We also applaud participants' political commitment to the elections and the respect shown for the electoral institutions, whose work must continue in transparency,

integrity and effectiveness in order to build voters' and candidates' confidence in the electoral process. And we salute the work of the Afghan authorities and security forces in protecting voters, particularly women, as they fulfilled their legitimate aspirations to elect their representatives and President in justice, safety and freedom. We call on the two presidential candidates to put the interests of Afghanistan and its people first and to do their best to end the stalemate so that the new President will be able to take on his responsibilities as soon as possible.

Although the process taking place in Afghanistan is cause for optimism, we must also be realistic in assessing the challenges facing the future Afghan President in the electoral process and beyond. The security situation remains difficult. The Afghan National Security Forces and civilians still suffer terrorist attacks, which we strongly condemn.

The international community must acknowledge that without robust, sustained and significant support for Afghanistan throughout the transition process and beyond the authorities will face problems in overcoming the many interlinked economic, political and security challenges. We agree with the Secretary-General that the Afghan people should not feel that they have been abandoned. We also join his appeal for States to meet their obligations to provide development assistance and security despite the military drawdown in Afghanistan. It is necessary to adapt the role of the United Nations in line with the changes on the ground in the upcoming period in order for the Organization to be able to provide international assistance to the Afghan people.

The Afghan Government itself must continue to ensure economic and political reform, the rule of law and good governance, including combating corruption, so that radical forces do not invoke popular justification for their action. All political forces in Afghanistan must work together in accordance with the constitutional framework to achieve national unity.

Afghanistan's security affects and is influenced by its regional neighbourhood. That makes it necessary to foster bilateral relations between Afghanistan and regional States and to achieve regional cooperation and direct security and political outreach, as well as a proper follow-up of the outcomes of the relevant processes and conferences. Regional cooperation on the ground is crucial to dealing with the illicit cultivation and trafficking of narcotic drugs, which threaten the socioeconomic future of Afghanistan and are a threat to international peace and security.

In that regard, Jordan welcomes the regional initiatives on drugs control, border management and enhanced cooperation between judicial and law enforcement bodies. We commend the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to combat drug trafficking and call on it not to let up its resolve to address that scourge. Jordan underscores the important role of the United Nations and of UNODC and the need for the Security Council to remain seized of the developments in that regard.

In conclusion, we would like to extend our thanks to the President of the Security Council for this month, the Russian Federation, for the draft presidential statement, which demonstrates the need for the unity of the international community in combating the scourge of narcotic drugs.

Ms. Paik Ji-ah (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to thank Special Representative Ján Kubiš and Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for his remarks.

Having held its run-off presidential elections, Afghanistan is at a critical juncture in its political transition. We recognize the high turnout in Afghanistan's presidential elections despite threats by the Taliban and other terrorist groups. The Afghan-led efforts for the electoral process, including those of the Afghan electoral institutions and Afghan National Security Forces, are also commendable. As a contributor to the project of the United Nations Development Programme to ensure women security officers in polling centres, we particularly praise the courage of the Afghan women who cast their ballots in the elections.

Despite those laudable efforts, it is imperative that the transparency and integrity of the entire electoral process be ensured. In the final stage of the run-off presidential elections, all stakeholders, including the candidates and their supporters, should refrain from any acts of incitement, violence or disorder. The electoral institutions and processes established in line with Afghanistan's laws and Constitution must be respected. Any complaints about the electoral process should be addressed through institutional mechanisms and procedures.

With regard to Afghanistan's security situation, we are deeply concerned about the increase in civilian casualties as compared with the same period in the year 2013. We strongly condemn the indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including through improvised explosive devices, and those aimed at disrupting the electoral process. Furthermore, the ongoing grave violations of children's rights, such as the killing of children, as well as attacks against schools and educational personnel, are a matter of grave concern to us.

On the narcotics issue in Afghanistan, we note the devastating effects that opium production and consumption have on the stability and development of Afghanistan. A comprehensive and coordinated response is essential in order to address that chronic issue, as it is linked to terrorism, transnational organized crime and money-laundering. We recognize the narcotic drugs control strategy of Afghanistan and the regional cooperation in the area of drugs control. We also appreciate the important role of UNODC in tackling that issue, including the publication of the annual *World Drug Report*. We call on the international community to further support Afghan-led efforts to that end as well.

Finally, in the light of the drawdown of the International Security Assistance Force from Afghanistan, it is important for the international community to keep its commitments to supporting the country. The NATO Summit in south Wales in September and the first ministerial review of progress on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, to be held in London later this year, will be important opportunities to reaffirm those commitments. The Afghan Government should also redouble its efforts for good governance, including its fight against corruption in the illicit economy.

The Afghan people demonstrated their aspiration for a democratic political transition during the electoral process. We support the peaceful and smooth transition in Afghanistan and look forward to the key role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the sustained contribution of the international community in that regard.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank Special Representative Kubiš and Executive Director Fedotov for their briefings. China also listened carefully to the statement of Permanent Representative Tanin of Afghanistan.

At present, the situation in Afghanistan is at a critical turning point. China welcomes the holding of the presidential election in Afghanistan in April and commends the Afghan people for their active participation in it. The high voter turnout fully demonstrated the Afghan people's confidence in a stable political transition. We hope that the presidential election will be a new starting point for Afghanistan towards unity and stability. China acknowledges the efforts of the Afghan Government and the relevant institutions in the election.

We have noted the recent turn of events with respect to the counting of ballots for the second round of presidential elections. We hope that the parties concerned will resolve the pertinent issues appropriately through dialogue. China will respect the choice of the Afghan people. We are confident that a stable and smooth conclusion of the election process will help Afghanistan to embark on the track of peace, stability and development at an early date.

The realization of the rebuilding of peace and durable security in Afghanistan is primarily contingent on the efforts of the Government and the people of Afghanistan, with the vigorous support of the international community. On the basis of full respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan, the international community should support the Afghan-led and Afghan-managed process and assist Afghans in their efforts to overcome various challenges encountered in transition and transformation so that they can realize national security and stability sooner.

China is deeply concerned about the unabated civilian casualties as a result of terrorist and violent attacks in Afghanistan. The relevant parties should effectively support the Afghan National Security Forces in assuming their security responsibilities and assist Afghanistan in strengthening its troop and police capacity. We urge the international community to play a positive and constructive role in Afghanistan's realization of a broadbased national reconciliation and support Afghanistan's High Peace Council in its efforts to press for national reconciliation.

The continued enhancement of Afghanistan's capacities in economic development is an important basis for its durable security and stability. We hope that the Afghan Government will continue to push for economic and social development, continuously improve

people's livelihoods and enable the entire population to enjoy the dividends of development in all areas and gradually eradicate the security threats of terrorism, drug cultivation and trafficking, and transnational organized crimes. The international community should effectively honour its relevant commitments and strengthen its support for Afghanistan towards the realization of economic development and social progress.

The United Nations, regional organizations and relevant initiatives have played an important role in helping Afghanistan and its region achieve security, stability and development. We support the United Nations in its continued central and coordinating role to help Afghanistan smoothly complete its transition and transformation. We hope that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan will strengthen its communication and cooperation with the Afghan Government and play its positive role in supporting the Afghan efforts for peace, stability and national rebuilding.

Afghanistan is a good and friendly neighbour of China. China hopes to see a unified, stable, developed and friendly Afghanistan. China resolutely supports Afghanistan in its efforts to maintain national sovereignty and territorial integrity. As an active supporter, participant and facilitator of Afghan peace and rebuilding, China has, over a long period of time, been providing Afghanistan with large amounts of economic and social development assistance, helping build hospitals, schools, roads and other infrastructure. In addition, China actively participates in the regional cooperation on Afghanistan and has made its contribution in facilitating Afghanistan's peace and rebuilding process.

The fourth ministerial meeting of the Istanbul Process will be convened in Tianjin, China, in August. China would like to closely cooperate with Afghanistan and the international community and facilitate the meeting so as to send a clear and positive signal of support for Afghanistan's political, economic and security transition. China would like to work with the international community in our joint effort to push for Afghanistan's early realization of durable peace and sustainable development.

Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for their briefings.

Chad welcomes the role played by UNAMA in supporting the transition process in Afghanistan, in accordance with its mandate. That has contributed to the preparation of free and fair presidential elections with broad voter participation. We also welcome the efforts of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. Despite threats by terrorists and other armed groups, the elections had a large number of female candidates. We therefore commend the courage of the Afghan people and encourage it to continue to fight for change. We call on the candidates to show restraint, maintain the calm atmosphere that prevailed during the electoral campaign, apply the remedies provided for by the laws in force for those filing objections and complaints and accept the verdict of the polls following the proclamation of the results.

Chad welcomes UNAMA's approach to resolving the post-election crisis by encouraging dialogue between candidate Abdullah Abdullah's camp, the members of the Independent Election Commission and the other candidates. We note with satisfaction the involvement of all components of Afghan society, in particular the political parties, traditional and religious authorities and civil society for their willingness to resolve the crisis by direct, inclusive dialogue, which is the sole guarantee for preserving peace in Afghanistan.

We deplore the fact that the security and human rights situation deteriorated during and after the vote as a result of acts of violence and intimidation perpetrated by the Taliban in association with Al-Qaida and other armed groups against voters, including the cutting off of fingers of persons who had voted. Those cruel and criminal acts constitute serious violations of human rights; the perpetrators should be prosecuted and held to account.

We wish to express our sympathy with the Afghan people, the families and staff of the accredited diplomatic missions in Afghanistan for the victims of the deadly attacks. We wish a speedy recovery to the injured. Chad believes that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is criminal and unjust, whatever the purpose, the time, the place and the perpetrators.

We welcome the political and diplomatic efforts deployed at the regional level for the strengthening

peace and security in Afghanistan. We encourage those promoting peace and security to continue in that direction. We are worried, however, by the increase in drug and narcotics trafficking, which adversely affects the population of the region and far beyond. In that regard, we welcome the Government's work to eradicate the cultivation of opium and its related enforcement efforts. We invite and encourage Afghanistan's neighbouring States to continue to work towards coordination and the cross-border fight against trafficking in drugs and weapons and we call on international community to support those efforts.

We deplore the fact that the humanitarian situation has deteriorated as a result of natural disasters bringing suffering to vulnerable populations in the northern part of Afghanistan, in particular women, children and the elderly. We support the Secretary-General's call to increase humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. We condemn all armed groups that are attacking humanitarian personnel in order to prevent them from bringing assistance to those in need. We also condemn the recruitment of child soldiers and violence against women and girls.

In conclusion, we call on the international community and the future Afghan Government to take all relevant measures to strengthen the country's security after the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force. We offer our heartfelt support to all United Nations personnel working in difficult and dangerous conditions in order to maintain peace and security in Afghanistan.

Mr. De Antueno (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš for presenting the report of the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2014/420). I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yury Fedotov, and Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan, for their briefings.

While Afghanistan awaits the results of the presidential elections, Argentina would like to express to the people and the Government of Afghanistan its desire that the elections allow them to consolidate their political transition and that they become the basis for strengthening their stability, reinforcing their national unity and promoting their sustainable development with equality. The high turnout by the people of Afghanistan, including the unprecedented number of women who participated in the electoral process, demonstrates the commitment of the people of Afghanistan to building their own future and their determination to fight for their rights in the face of threats and attacks from the Taliban. For the political transition to be legitimate, it is important that the presidential election effectively reflect the popular will demonstrated at the ballot box. It is vital that the allegations of fraud be investigated, the disputes be resolved through the proper legal framework and all candidates accept the outcome of the elections.

The challenges that await the new authorities are as well-known as they are overwhelming. The new authorities will also have to address the Afghan people's desire for peace. In that context, a peace process that includes direct consultations between the Government and the main opposition forces is essential to put an end to the cycle of violence that continues to afflict Afghanistan.

A democratic and prosperous Afghanistan will depend on the success of the reconciliation process in the framework of a comprehensive strategy for protecting and promoting human rights and access to education, health services and work for all Afghan people. The Government of Afghanistan has a responsibility that it cannot put off or ignore to ensure the full implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women so that perpetrators are held accountable. In that context, we note the change in the criminal code allowing women to testify against family members and thus facilitating trials for domestic violence cases. In addition, it is encouraging to see the progress that the Government of Afghanistan has achieved in implementing its plan of action on children in armed conflict.

It is worrying that Afghanistan is one of the least developed countries and that the security sector absorbs almost half of its national budget. Implementing the Kabul process and coordinating development assistance continues to be vital, but no less important than the fact that humanitarian assistance and development should respect the priorities and programmes established by the Government of Afghanistan itself.

Argentina supports efforts to prevent the production and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan. Regional cooperation is crucial, both in terms of applying the law and criminal justice processes and in terms of seeking to reduce the demand for drugs. It is of concern that, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Afghanistan is facing one of the highest levels of drug addiction in the entire world. In that

context, we believe that it is appropriate that special attention be given to young people in the programmes being implemented in Afghanistan. We highlight the important role being played by the United Nations in support of national efforts and the importance of coordinating between the various agencies in the system to implement a comprehensive approach in that regard.

This year, as Afghanistan is preparing to assume new and growing responsibilities, the role of the United Nations continues to be crucial in assisting the Government to meet its security and development obligations and supporting the coordination of international aid, among other things. The Afghan people should not be abandoned.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš for his update to the Council and Mr. Fedotov for his briefing. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for his remarks. I will focus today on four areas: elections, security, engagement with the Government of Afghanistan and counter-narcotics.

Since the Council last met to discuss Afghanistan in March (see S/PV.7139) we have seen some extraordinary moments of courage from the Afghan people. In April and again earlier this month, they showed the world their desire to have a say in their country's future by turning out to vote in the presidential elections. They voted for peace, as Ambassador Tanin said. That is a huge achievement.

As the electoral process enters the final stages, it is essential that all stakeholders act in the interest of stability and national unity. Special Representative Kubiš has underlined the need to find a way forward. We urge both presidential candidates and their teams to demonstrate the same patience and respect with the electoral authorities that they did during the first round.

At this critical time in the process, both candidates need to work with the Independent Election Commission and Independent Electoral Complaints Commission and their established legal mechanisms for investigating and adjudicating complaints, as the representative of Australia and others have said. We also urge the electoral institutions to conduct their investigations thoroughly and transparently.

The fighting season in Afghanistan is under way, and security is a challenge for all concerned. Over the past three months, as the Secretary-General's report (S/2014/420) highlights, a high number of incidents have been reported. Innocent civilians have been targeted and killed. Those attacks must be strongly condemned.

We pay tribute to the courage and sacrifice of the security forces operating in Afghanistan at this challenging time. Their dedication has allowed the Government of Afghanistan to build the foundations for a stable and democratic country. In particular, we recognize the contributions of the Afghan National Security Forces. Their security plans, implemented as a backdrop to insurgent attempts to disrupt the elections, were a testament to both their confidence and their capability. The support of NATO and the international community will be vital to ensuring that security in Afghanistan lasts. The NATO Summit to be hosted by the United Kingdom later in 2014 will be an opportunity to underline the establishment of NATO's military, financial and political support to Afghanistan beyond 2014 and to mark the achievements of the International Security Assistance Force. Regional initiatives such as the Istanbul Process, for which China will host the next meeting in Tianjin at the end of August 2014, will continue to play a vital role.

Once a new President and his team are in place in Afghanistan, the United Kingdom will work in close cooperation with partners on the Council and the wider international community to pursue shared aspirations. Together we must set out a constructive approach that allows the new Afghan President and his team the space to formulate their own vision for the future while pressing ahead on the key reforms and priorities we know must happen quickly.

For the United Kingdom, the signing of the United States-Afghan bilateral security agreement and the NATO status-of-forces agreement is key. Subject to those agreements, the Resolute Support mission will be a vital part of NATO's engagement in Afghanistan beyond 2014. President Obama's announcement of the United States contribution, which the representative of the United States just referred to a moment ago, is a significant step forward.

We also want to signal the importance of a peace process and engagement with key regional partners on how best to sustain the progress made in the region. On the economy, steps to shore up longer-term confidence in Afghanistan's economic future will be vital, including by adopting and implementing important economic legislation. The support of the Council and the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan

will be essential in that effort, both in signalling our expectations and delivering key assistance on the ground.

Finally, as Mr. Fedotov has outlined to the Council, the challenge posed by drugs to Afghanistan and the wider region is serious. The United Kingdom recognizes the importance of tackling the drug trade and the significant challenges that remain. That is a complex problem, which requires a comprehensive approach combining tougher law enforcement, economic development initiatives and the promotion of alternative livelihoods. The United Kingdom will continue to work with the United Nations and international partners to support the Afghan Government in that effort.

For all the challenges that lie ahead, we see many reasons to be hopeful in Afghanistan. The United Kingdom will continue to play a strong and committed role in supporting the Government of Afghanistan in building a more peaceful and prosperous future for all Afghans.

Mr. Bertoux (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Ján Kubiš, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Fedotov, for their briefings.

Mr. Kubiš's absence from New York today is a telling testament to the importance of following the situation in the country hour by hour and of the ever-pressing need of an attentive presence alongside Afghanistan. I take this opportunity to thank the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for its exemplary work and to commend all its personnel for their commitment.

Afghanistan has just experienced a major turning point in its political life. The holding of two elections, presidential and provincial, has revealed the high degree of professionalism of the Afghan authorities responsible for their organization. Moreover, the mass participation of Afghans, especially women, in both rounds of the presidential election bore witness to their courage and to their desire to embrace democratic rules. We extend our congratulations in particular to the Afghan National Security Forces for their outstanding performance in securing that democratic convergence. They thereby frustrated the aims of those who refuse the resolute choice made by the Afghans in favour of a future where violence and coercion are not policy options.

The post-election phase will be as critical as the preparations for the elections. It is essential that any challenges to the results, if the latter have not been arrived at according to the rules and procedures, do not tarnish the success of Afghan democracy. There can be no other manner of appointing the future Afghan President than through full respect for the electoral process. That holds true for future votes as well.

Both candidates must comply with current operations and avoid all provocative rhetoric. Confidence in the balloting and counting of votes and in the announcement of the results is the key to the legitimacy of the future President and hence of his ability to take the reins of the country. In that regard, we welcome the decision by Mr. Abdullah Abdullah to resume cooperation with the competent institutions. A draft presidential statement has been prepared to that end at the initiative of Australia, welcoming the commitment of all stakeholders to the success of this phase.

Afghanistan's launch into a new phase must not allow us to forget the many challenges the country is still facing and for which the support of the international community is necessary. We are concerned by the upsurge in drug trafficking. I shall not expatiate on the extent of the problem. We are aware of the efforts being made by the Afghans on that front, as rightly recalled by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2014/420). We know above all that the challenge requires the commitment of all, especially Afghanistan's regional partners. All must be done to avoid the worst — that is, leaving Afghanistan on its own to address an uprising that, while surely weakened, has not been fully suppressed. Nor can we abandon the Afghan National Security Forces, which have proved their robustness and efficiency, but are worried about the withdrawal of the international community, with a rebuilt but still very fragile socioeconomic and institutional fabric.

The draft presidential statement that we shall adopt today, at the initiative of Russia, makes that very assessment. It is not a criticism of the Afghans as new authorities prepare to take power. It is not an a priori directive framing the future of international commitment. As one phase of intense international involvement draws to a close, it is an invitation to reflect on the shape of our future presence. The draft presidential statement, which incorporates the broad principles already laid down by the Council, stresses

that the subject of the fight against drugs will also be part of our thinking.

The action of the international community in Afghanistan must indeed adapt. The models applied hitherto, characterized by a counter-insurgency strategy, will necessarily evolve. However, we will not renounce the values for which we fought alongside Afghans for 10 years. I am thinking in particular of the role and rights of women in Afghan society.

We have a few months before us to evaluate and determine how the international community can support Afghanistan in the long term. In that respect, the place assigned to the fight against drugs in the UNAMA mandate will have to be strengthened. All possible synergies among the actors in Afghanistan should be supported; while it must need evolve into a counter-narcotics entity, UNAMA will have to assume that role.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

We are grateful to Mr. Kubiš and Mr. Fedotov for their detailed briefings, and to Mr. Tanin for his interesting statement.

The Russian delegation aligns itself with the statement to be made by the Permanent Representative of the Kyrgyz Republic on behalf of the member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

For our part, we also wish to emphasize the historic importance of the presidential and provincial elections. The fact that they were successfully conducted, despite attempts by terrorists and extremist forces to disrupt them, confirms the Afghan people's commitment to a strong, independent and democratic State. However, we find it unsettling that the process has been fraught with uncertainty, which arose after the second round of presidential elections. We hope that all grievances and disputes related to the electoral process and vote counting will be settled legally, in the higher interests of the Afghan people.

At this critical juncture, we reiterate the need for a fair and comprehensive analysis of the risks and threats facing Afghanistan. The aggressive activities of the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other terrorist and extremist groups is causing a significant increase in civilian casualties and losses among the Afghan security forces personnel. Despite their dedication, armed opposition, fuelled by internal and external sources, including through drug production and drug trafficking, are entrenching themselves in large areas of the country, including regions that had been completely controlled by the Government. There is a deteriorating situation in the south, south-east and east, where more than 60 per cent of all security incidents have occurred. It is troubling that Al-Qaida affiliated groups have felt increasingly free to conduct brazen attacks on Government forces in coordination with the Taliban and other extremist groups.

We are particularly concerned about the growth of terrorist activity and the strengthening of anti-Government forces in the north and north-east, directly bordering our friends and allies in the CSTO and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The armed opposition groups now total more than 10,000, while three to four years ago, north Afghanistan was relatively peaceful. There is a clearly visible trend of terrorist activity overflowing Afghanistan's borders, as evidenced by the increasingly frequent cross-border incidents. This creates new challenges to the security of Central Asia.

We hope that, by the end of this year, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) will fully report to the Security Council on the implementation of its mandate. The question remains of a possible foreign military presence in Afghanistan after 2014. In any case, when deciding what stabilization actions are necessary, a foreign military contingent should no longer be needed in Afghanistan.

Russia fully supports the efforts of the Afghan Government to promote national reconciliation. We agree with our Afghan friends that a leading role should be played by the Afghans themselves. Dialogue with the armed opposition should be organized based on a triad of principles: fighters must renounce violence, recognize the Constitution and cut ties with Al-Qaida. There can be no attempts to dilute those principles or weaken the Security Council sanctions regime with the allegedly noble goal of speeding up dialogue, because the results will indeed be the opposite of those desired.

Today's debate on the situation in Afghanistan is held on the eve of the International Day against Drug Use and Illicit Trafficking on 26 June. Unfortunately, we regret that despite the concerted efforts of the international community and the Government of Afghanistan, the situation of the illegal production and trafficking of drugs and narcotics in the country

is not improving, but actually tending to worsen. Afghanistan is turning into one of the global hubs of drug production, as evidenced by data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The volume of illegally cultivated Afghan opiate poppy continues to rise. In the past year, areas under cultivation increased by 36 per cent as compared with those of 2012. At the same time, there has been a 50 per cent increase in the production of opium.

In that regard, the presence of many thousands of ISAF troops withdrew, under various pretexts, from active combat related to narcotics production, despite the obvious risks that the trafficking presents for stabilization in Afghanistan. We encourage the new Afghan leadership to make counter-narcotics efforts a priority. Without solving that issue there can be neither healthy development nor stability in the country or the region. It would seem that this moment could be a turning point in terms of scaling up international efforts to combat the scourge of drug trafficking, in close coordination with the Government of Afghanistan. Of particular importance in that regard is the need for consistent steps towards furthering cooperation in bilateral, regional, subregional and multilateral formats, primarily with the countries of the region, based on the principle of common and shared responsibility.

Among the most urgent measures to combat the threat of drugs we would place the consolidation of counter-narcotics institutions, along with the development of international, inter-State and non-governmental mechanisms for drug rehabilitation, enhanced targeted pressure on the Afghan drug industry, strategic anti-drug operations, increased police cooperation and the pursuit of a common agricultural policy, including through the implementation of alternative development programmes in Afghanistan that speed up the industrialization of the country.

We believe that the promotion of alternative development programmes could be the key to freeing Afghan society from the domination of the drug economy. Such programmes should be extended to the whole of Afghanistan, and should be made the major thrust of the country's economic development. In that context, I would like to note that the Ministerial Conference on Counter-Narcotics held in Moscow on 15 May adopted an outcome document providing for a set of measures that would strengthen international efforts to eradicate the drug problem, in particular by drawing up a comprehensive plan for alternative development in Afghanistan from 2015 to 2020, and by creating a global alliance for alternative development. The participants at the meeting also agreed on the need to create an international drug rehabilitation fund to assist individual countries in establishing national systems for comprehensive rehabilitation and re-socialization for drug users. And there was support for Russia's proposal to establish an international headquarters to combat the Afghan drug threat with the aim of consolidating the disparate anti-drug programmes in Afghanistan and establishing effective, internationally controlled mechanisms for eradicating drug production.

Given the massive negative geopolitical impact of the industrial production of Afghan narcotics, it would seem pertinent to consider including that issue on the agenda of the 2016 special session of the General Assembly on the global narcotics problem. At the same time, preparations for that meeting should be based on a comprehensive approach to the drug issue, relying on the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs as a key United Nations body in that area.

In conclusion, we fully believe that there is a need to bolster regional cooperation in order to assist Afghanistan in building a peaceful, independent and economically prosperous State. We believe that the ideal platform for synchronizing regional efforts to assist Afghanistan is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in which practically all countries in the region, including Afghanistan, are represented.

Achieving tangible results in the stabilization of Afghanistan and its development as an independent and peaceful State, free of terrorism and drug-related crime, requires collective, coordinated effort. Invaluable assistance to that end will be provided by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, whose role as the international military presence draws down will only increase. For its part, Russia is open to mutually beneficial partnerships with all stakeholders in the implementation of significant projects that will help Afghanistan guarantee sustainable development, well-being and prosperity for all its citizens.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I will now resume my role as President of the Security Council.

Following consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council welcomes the holding of the second round of the Afghan presidential

election on 14 June and reiterates the importance of these historic elections to Afghanistan's transition and democratic development. It commends the participation and courage of the Afghan people to cast their ballot despite the threat and intimidation by the Taliban and other violent extremist and terrorist groups. It further commends the participation of Afghan women in the electoral process, and underlines the key role that they play in Afghan-led peace, democracy and stability.

"The Security Council notes positively the efforts of the Afghan people to prepare for and hold these elections, including security arrangements, and reiterates the important role of the Afghan electoral institutions, including the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission. It calls upon Afghan electoral institutions to uphold the highest standards of integrity throughout this important and historic process, and emphasizes that all efforts must be made to ensure the integrity, neutrality and transparency of the electoral process, including the detection and prevention of fraud.

"The Security Council calls on all stakeholders to engage with the electoral institutions and processes with patience and respect, refrain from any acts that incite imminent violence and civil disorder or lead to instability, and to channel complaints through the established institutional mechanisms in line with Afghanistan's electoral laws and Constitution.

"The Security Council looks forward to the conclusion of the electoral process in accordance with the relevant laws and mandates of the electoral institutions and the orderly transition to a new administration and welcomes the ongoing support role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

"The Security Council calls on all political entities to work together in accordance with the Afghan Constitution, with the aim of strengthening Afghanistan's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity in order to achieve a peaceful and prosperous future for all the people of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council condemns the actions of those who attempted to disrupt the elections, such as terrorist attacks against civilians, including election personnel and candidates, as well as attacks against election infrastructure. It condemns violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other violent and extremist groups and illegal armed groups aimed at destabilizing the situation in the country.

"The Security Council recognizes the sacrifices of the Afghan people and Afghan National Security Forces during the election period, and reiterates that no terrorist act can reverse the path towards Afghan-led peace, democracy and stability."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2014/11.

Following consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council recognizes the threat posed by the production, trade, trafficking of illicit drugs to international peace and stability in different regions of the world and the important role played by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in this regard.

"The Security Council expresses concern at the increase in poppy production as noted in the UNODC *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2013*, noting the serious harm that opium cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption continues to cause to the stability, security, social and economic development and governance of Afghanistan as well as to the region and internationally, and stresses the important role of the United Nations to continue to monitor the drug situation in Afghanistan. The Council encourages International Security Assistance Force to further effectively support, within its designated responsibilities, Afghan-led sustained efforts, including efforts by the Afghan National Security Forces, to address drug production and trafficking, in cooperation with relevant international and regional actors.

"The Security Council notes that according to the *World Drug Report 2013*, Afghanistan remains one of the foremost source countries for opiates and cannabis resin.

"The Security Council reaffirms that Afghanistan's peaceful future lies in the building of a stable, secure, economically sustainable state, free of terrorism and narcotics and based on the rule of law, strengthened democratic institutions, respect for the separation of powers, reinforced constitutional checks and balances and the guarantee and enforcement of citizens' rights and obligations. The Council renews its commitment to assisting Afghanistan on its path towards peace, democracy and reconstruction.

"The Security Council welcomes the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan in fighting drug production in Afghanistan.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of a comprehensive approach to address the security, economic, governance and development challenges in Afghanistan, which are of an interconnected nature, and recognizes that there is no purely military solution to ensure the stability of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council calls on the United Nations, with the support of the international community, to support the Government of Afghanistan's national priority programmes covering the issues of security, governance, justice and economic and social development and to support the full implementation of mutual commitments made on those issues at international conferences, as well as on continuing implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy, and requests that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in an increasingly enabling function, assist the Government of Afghanistan on its way towards ensuring full Afghan leadership and ownership, as defined by the Kabul process.

"The Security Council reiterates its support for the transition (inteqal) process, which will entail the assumption of full responsibility by Afghanistan's institutions in the security sector, consistent with the London, Kabul, Bonn and Tokyo Conferences and the NATO Lisbon and Chicago Summits.

"The Security Council stresses the central and impartial role that the United Nations will continue to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan by leading the efforts of the international community.

"The Security Council reiterates its concern about the security situation in Afghanistan, in particular the ongoing violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other violent and extremist groups, illegal armed groups, criminals and those involved in the production, trafficking or trade of illicit drugs, and the strong links between terrorism activities and illicit drugs, resulting in threats to the local population, including women, children, national security forces and international military and civilian personnel, including humanitarian and development workers.

"The Security Council notes with concern the existing links between international security, terrorism and transnational organized crime, money-laundering, trafficking in illicit drugs and illegal arms, and in this regard emphasizes the need to enhance coordination of efforts on the national, subregional, regional and international levels in order to strengthen a global response to that serious challenge and in particular to the close connections between international terrorism and illicit drugs. The Council welcomes the recent efforts carried out under the Russian presidency of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering on the identification of illicit financial flows linked to Afghan drug production and trafficking.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need to enhance existing interregional and international cooperation and coordination mechanisms in order to develop an integrated, comprehensive and balanced response to the drug problem, including as part of a long-term security, development and institution-building agenda.

"The Security Council encourages an enhanced collaboration between all relevant entities, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including the United Nations Police Division, and the United Nations Development Programme in order to have an effective and detailed coordination mechanism to prioritize activities, support the National Drug Control Strategy and ensure coordinated implementation of a comprehensive United Nations comprehensive approach. It encourages the inclusion of combating drug trafficking and transnational organized crime in the work of all relevant United Nations entities

involved in Afghanistan, in accordance with their respective mandates and actively maximizing their synergies.

"The Security Council reaffirms specifically in that context its support for the implementation, under the leadership and ownership of the Afghan people, of the commitments set out in the London (S/2010/65) and Kabul Conference communiqués, and of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and of the National Drug Control Strategy as part of the comprehensive implementation strategy to be taken forward by the Government of Afghanistan with the support of the region and the international community and with a central and impartial coordinating role for the United Nations, consistent with the Kabul process and in line with the national priority programmes.

"The Security Council, stressing the crucial importance of advancing regional and interregional cooperation, welcomes in that regard the continued commitment of the international community to support stability and development in Afghanistan, and calls on the Afghan Government, with the assistance of the international community, to accelerate the implementation of the National Drug Control Strategy, including through alternative livelihood programmes, encourages additional international support for the four priorities identified in that Strategy, and commends the support provided by the UNODC to the Triangular Initiative and the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre within the framework of the Paris Pact initiative and the Rainbow Strategy, the UNODC regional programme for Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, relevant efforts by the Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan, the European Union (EU) through the EU Border Management Programme in Central Asia and Border Management Northern Afghanistan, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan process, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) engagement with Afghanistan, based on the 2011 Vilnius ministerial declaration, and by means of implementation of the OSCE project at the OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, inter alia, the training of Afghan law enforcement officers in combating illicit drugs at the Domodedovo Police Academy of Russia and their continued training in the United States Drug Enforcement Administration Training Academy, the Siberian Law Institute and the North-Western Training Institute of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service.

"The Security Council calls upon States to strengthen international and regional cooperation to counter the threat to the international community posed by the production, trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs originating in Afghanistan, with a view to its progressive elimination, in accordance with the principle of common and shared responsibility in addressing the drug problem of Afghanistan, including through strengthening law enforcement capacity and cooperation in countering the trafficking in illicit drugs and precursor chemicals and money-laundering and corruption linked to such trafficking. The Council also encourages Member States to undertake further action, as well as to consider, on the basis of concrete proposals by UNODC and theInternational Narcotics Control Board, through the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and possible new international initiatives aimed at strengthening the combat against illicit trafficking in chemicals.

"The Security Council notes the ongoing importance of the counter-narcotics issue to the United Nations engagement in Afghanistan. It reiterates the need for the Council to be kept informed, including by the UNODC, of the threats of drug-trafficking and related transnational crime on situations on the Council's agenda, notably when examining the mandates of peacekeeping operations and political missions.

"The Security Council reiterates its invitation to the Secretary-General to consider the threats resulting from drug trafficking and related illegal activities as a factor in conflict prevention strategies, conflict analysis, integrated mission assessments, planning and peacebuilding support and to consider including in his reports, analysis of the role played by those threats in situations on the Council's agenda.

"The Security Council welcomes further briefings on the situation of drug trafficking

in Afghanistan, as necessary, by the Executive Director of UNODC."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2014/12.

I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Bishnoi (India): At the outset let me thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ján Kubiš, and Ambassador Tanin for their briefings. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his quarterly report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2014/420).

I would like to begin by paying tribute to the people of Afghanistan, who have endured endless violence but emerged triumphant every time. The conduct of the first and second rounds of the presidential elections, despite the threat of terrorist violence and intimidation of elders of the community, is a testimony to the great courage and democratic conviction of all the people of Afghanistan, regardless of their age or ethnicity.

There is no better testament than these recent elections to the fact that Afghanistan belongs to all Afghans, not to any one group or ethnicity. There is a fundamental understanding among the Afghan leadership that while it may take a simple arithmetical majority to win an election, it takes national consensus and inclusiveness to build a strong democratic and prosperous country. We congratulate President Karzai on his leadership and statesmanship in ensuring the accomplishment of this first political transition. His is a special political legacy that will always be recognized by the people of Afghanistan and the region.

We also congratulate all the presidential candidates who participated in both the first and second rounds, under extremely difficult security conditions. Their act of participation in this democratic process and rallying voters in large numbers, despite the trying circumstances, may have done more for democracy in Afghanistan than any other measure. The two candidates who fought the second round also have the onerous responsibility, along with the representatives of other Afghan institutions, of ensuring that the process is completed. The political transition that will take place on 2 August will mark a significant milestone in Afghanistan's history, and we will never forget the great sacrifice and suffering the brave people of Afghanistan have undergone to reach it.

The attack of 23 May on the Indian Consulate in Herat was a grim reminder that terrorism, not ethnicity or tribal differences, is the greatest threat to peace and stability in Afghanistan and to the Afghan people's chances of attaining a path to self-sustained economic growth and prosperity. The discussion in the Secretary-General's report of the security situation in Afghanistan is a sobering reminder of the extent of this danger. We were distressed to learn that incidents in the south, south-east, and east of the country alone accounted for 3,917 of the total number of incidents in the short period between 1 March and 31 May.

The Secretary-General notes that there has also been an increase in incidents where a variety of Al-Qaida affiliates, including the Pakistan-based Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, have been regularly making attacks on Afghan security forces alongside actions by elements of the former Taliban regime. The only way to defeat this scourge is through wholehearted support from the international community aimed at developing a prosperous, independent and sovereign Afghanistan capable of defending itself.

Though the international community's focus has been on the security and political transitions in Afghanistan, we must not allow our attention to be diverted from the equally important issue of the country's economic development. In that context, UNAMA and the United Nations agencies whose activities it is supposed to coordinate have a significant role to play. UNAMA has the important job of supporting Afghan political institutions, but it must also work to harness the unique capabilities of the United Nations and its development agencies to expand humanitarian assistance and development services to the most remote villages in Afghanistan.

India's commitment to assisting the people and Government of Afghanistan as they build a peaceful, pluralistic, democratic and prosperous country will remain unwavering. In conclusion, we would like to once again congratulate the people of Afghanistan on their enthusiastic participation in the elections. We want to express our full support for the political, social and economic transition taking place there. Afghanistan is standing at the threshold of a historic transition, and we would like to convey our best wishes to its people. At this critical juncture, we would like

to assure Afghanistan of the steadfast support of the Government and people of India.

Mr. Rishchynski (Canada) (*spoke in French*): In the past few months Afghanistan has passed a series of historic milestones. The elections of 5 April and the runoff contest on 14 June were both significant achievements. Threats from the Taliban and other insurgent groups aimed at disrupting and discrediting the democratic process did not deter the Afghans, who, with many women and young people among them, came out in their millions to cast their ballots in both rounds. The fact that so many Afghans, particularly so many women, participated in the electoral process in order to make their voices heard, despite the efforts of insurgents to discourage them, shows the degree to which the Taliban has been marginalized among the people of Afghanistan.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada acknowledges the work of the Ministry of Interior and the Afghan national security forces in ensuring that the elections could proceed. That they succeeded, despite threats by insurgents to disrupt them, is a testament to the increasing capacity of these vital security institutions. Canada remains committed to supporting the national security forces and to strengthening their capacity to respond to threats and provide security for the Afghan people. Nevertheless, we are deeply concerned by the recent allegations of fraud that have been made. We urge the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission to take all measures necessary to investigate and resolve in a thorough and transparent manner all allegations of fraud that have been registered, in order to maintain confidence in the electoral process. It is essential that the process, including the adjudication of complaints, enables the will of the Afghan people to be heard.

(*spoke in French*)

The months ahead will put Afghanistan's new leader to the test. Given that the international forces will be leaving the country this year, Afghanistan's stability and security will depend increasingly on well-trained and -equipped national security forces. The international community has indicated that it is committed to helping Afghanistan strengthen its security forces, but that can be realized only if adequate arrangements are put in place on the ground. We urge the Government of Afghanistan to sign the bilateral security agreement proposed by the United States and conclude a status of forces agreement with NATO as soon as possible, in order to enable the international community to begin planning the next phase of military assistance to Afghanistan. It is also essential to ensure accountability and transparency for the international financing, including Canada's commitment of $330 million over three years starting in 2015, that has been pledged in support to the Afghan national security forces.

(*spoke in English*)

The commitment of the Afghan people to a secure and democratic future is clear, and Canada is committed to supporting that path. However, Afghanistan's full potential will never be realized until the rights of all its citizens, especially women and girls, are fully protected and realized. The future success and stability of Afghanistan will be a direct result of the full participation and empowerment of Afghan women. Canada will continue to emphasize that more must be done to ensure that women's voices are heard and listened to in all decision-making processes. In order for Afghan women to be empowered, we must also make sure that they are safe and secure.

Afghanistan must meet its international commitments and implement its law on the elimination of violence against women in order to protect Afghan women and girls from sexual violence, abuse and forced, early and child marriage. We have seen around the world that successful peace agreements are those that listen to the voices of women and girls, who are the foundation of a society. The rights of women and girls must be central to any eventual peace agreement. Looking ahead to the parliamentary elections of 2015, it is essential that the voice of Afghan women not be diminished. We will continue to strongly support the full political participation of Afghan women throughout that process. As half of the population and more than one third of the voters in the recent election, their voices and their opinions are essential to building a stronger, more secure and prosperous Afghanistan.

It is also imperative that Afghanistan's new leader ensure that the country continues to fulfil its commitments under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. Canada's $227 million in development assistance between 2014 and 2017 are contingent upon those key reforms. The Afghan Parliament has already taken important steps towards achieving some of the outstanding benchmarks. The anti-money-laundering and combating the financing of terrorism laws are in

the process of being adopted. Such laws are essential to helping curb corruption and increasing the transparency of Afghanistan's financial sector.

We also welcome the approval of the Minerals Law by the Wolesi Jirga, which, once adopted, will help to lay the groundwork for Afghanistan's long-term economic development. There is still work to be done to strengthen the mining regulations in order to guard against corruption, to increase transparency and to guarantee water rights for all Afghan communities, as well as to ensure that Afghanistan's extractive sector is developed in a responsible and sustainable manner. We urge the responsible ministries to put such regulations in place as soon as possible.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, this year, Afghanistan has taken significant steps to ensure the stability and security of its territory. However, there are still challenges to overcome. The Afghan Government must continue its efforts in the areas of security, transparency and respect for human rights. The terrorist networks from neighbouring States that have set up on Afghan territory must be held accountable for their actions. Protecting the human rights of all Afghan citizens, in particular women and girls, must be at the centre of a possible peace agreement. Those are great challenges but Canada is committed to working with the next leader, chosen democratically by the people, so as to help Afghanistan move forward without the undue interference of its neighbours.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): We congratulate the people of Afghanistan on having successfully conducted two rounds of presidential elections. Those landmark elections should deepen democracy, bring the first step of a democratic transfer of power and move the country towards peace and stability. It is a defining moment for Afghanistan and the region.

Afghanistan's political continuity and national reconciliation, as well as its security and economic transitions, clearly hinge on a smooth democratic transition. Afghan institutions now have an historic obligation to take the electoral process towards its logical end. It is time to build trust, complete the task at hand and usher in a new era in the history of Afghanistan. We believe that the Afghan elections are an internal affair, led by Afghan institutions. It is the aspiration of the people of Afghanistan to resolve differences within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and laws. We agree with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš that it is indeed a time for engagement and statesmanship.

For its part, Pakistan took a series of steps to support a free, peaceful and secure electoral process in Afghanistan. We bolstered security along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border by deploying additional troops, enhancing communications vigilance and aerial surveillance and increasing patrols. Pakistan has no favourites. Afghans are a proud people and masters of their own destiny. We respect the democratic choice of the people of Afghanistan and look forward to working with the next leader. The people of Afghanistan realize that the political transition will not deliver its full dividends until a lasting political settlement is worked out through an inclusive, Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation process. Pakistan is committed to facilitating that process.

While acknowledging the professional strengths that the Afghan National Security Forces have been gathering over the years, both the Secretary-General and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) have warned that the Security Forces will need support beyond 2014 to ensure their viability and sustainability. The ongoing security, political and economic transitions in Afghanistan must not be thwarted or derailed. The projected drawdowns should be prudent and responsible. They should not leave any security vacuums and no one should harbour ambitions to fill such vacuums. The world had to pay a heavy price for the precipitous withdrawals in the 1990s. A repeat of that precedent would be more costly to peace and security.

There are forecasts of an economic downturn as the war economy, we hope, changes into a peace economy. The Secretary-General has cautioned that the decrease in the physical presence of foreign troops should not lead to a decrease in development assistance. The misperception that Afghanistan was being abandoned must be rectified. The international community has a responsibility to avert a large-scale economic recession in Afghanistan, which could lead to unemployment, displacement and a greater reliance on the illicit economy. The reconstruction efforts must focus on policies that would stimulate growth and investment, create jobs and facilitate the rehabilitation of refugees.

Pakistan continues to host 3 million registered or unregistered Afghan refugees. We have been bearing the burden of an even higher number of refugees for the past 34 years. According to the Secretary-General, the registered 1.6 million refugees alone represent the world's largest protracted refugee population. In April, Pakistan and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees launched a solutions strategy for the sustainable return and reintegration of Afghan refugees. Recently, there has been a sharp decrease, of about 64 per cent, in the return of refugees. The international community must step forward to help quicken the pace of repatriation of Afghan refugees and the United Nations should assist the Afghan Government in creating pull factors.

Pakistan is one of the victims of the opiates trafficked from Afghanistan. We are glad that the Afghan Government has intensified its counter-narcotics campaign by conducting targeted operations, dismantling laboratories, seizing illicit drugs and eradicating opium poppy cultivation on hundreds of hectares of land. Yet we realize that the overall pace has slowed down and that we have a long way to go. Pakistan, in collaboration with Afghanistan and Iran as part of the Triangular Initiative, will continue to work for more stringent drugs control and border management.

Peace in Afghanistan has a direct bearing on regional economic cooperation. In order to enhance regional connectivity, as well as trade and energy flows, Pakistan supports transregional projects, including the Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and infrastructure development. Their success clearly depends on stability in Afghanistan.

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations continue to be marked by contacts and communication at the highest level. President Mamnoon Hussain, who visited Kabul last March, along with President Karzai, underlined that the people of our two countries would tap the vast potential for progress and prosperity. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who has met with President Karzai four times in the past year, is pursuing his vision of a peaceful neighbourhood and stable and cooperative relations with Afghanistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan agree that terrorism and violent extremism pose a grave threat to our two countries. We must fight the scourge together. In that context, border management and border security are an abiding concern and priority. Our Chief of Army Staff, General Rahid Sharif, visited Kabul to discuss with his counterpart the security situation in Afghanistan, ISAF drawdown and ways to enhance bilateralism, with particular emphasis on better coordination along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Pakistan and Afghanistan must not allow non-State actors to influence their relationship. Because of the fluid situation along the border, it is important to have more frequent and real-time communication between military and intelligence agencies to address mutual concerns and build trust. Allegations made by Kabul from time to time against cross-border shelling from the Pakistani side are exaggerated and misinformed. When our forces come under heavy attack by terrorists from across the border, we act in self-defence.

We have launched a comprehensive operation, Zarb-e-Azb, to deliver a fatal blow to foreign and local terrorists hiding in our tribal areas. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, while addressing the Parliament on 16 June, said that we have started the operation to make Pakistan a land of peace. Through those operations we would purge selected areas of militants and terrorists, dismantle terrorist entities and networks and establish the full writ of the State. The operations in north Waziristan should not be a cause for concern for the Government of Afghanistan but a source of strength for it.

We express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of recent flash floods and landslides in Afghanistan. Pakistan sent three planes loaded with relief supplies for the people stricken by the massive landslide on 2 May in Badakhshan. Afghanistan remains vulnerable to recurrent sudden and slow onset disasters. As pointed out by the Secretary-General, the United Nations should help Afghanistan develop a risk reduction and risk management strategy.

We admire and commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ján Kubiš, for his effective, sensitive and results-oriented leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. I also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yury Fedotov, for his briefing this morning.

Finally, I thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin for the very insightful, forward-looking and constructive statement he delivered this morning.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to remind speakers of the time limit for their statements and ask them kindly to respect those time limits.

I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting. Due to time limitations, I will make only the salient points of my statement. Copies of my full text will be circulated in the Chamber.

Japan welcomes the adoption today of the presidential statement on the Afghan presidential elections (S/PRST/2014/11). We echo Security Council members in welcoming the holding of the second round of voting that took place on 14 June, as scheduled. The voting was conducted in relative calm, although security threats were witnessed in some areas. We express our admiration for the Afghan people, the security forces and all those involved in carrying out the election.

In support of the elections, Japan provided $16 million. We hope that the process leading up to the announcement of the final results, which is scheduled for 22 July, will proceed in a fair, prompt and peaceful manner. In that regard, it is essential that both candidates, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah and Mr. Ashraf Ghani, respect the mandate of the election bodies and cooperate to avoid worsening the situation. Once electoral complaints have been adjudicated according to the law, both candidates and their supporters need to accept the outcome. The electoral bodies, for their part, must demonstrate transparency and integrity as they count ballots and deal with complaints submitted by the candidates. We hope to see the orderly transition to an inclusive and reform-minded new Government led by the new president. The new Government will have to address important challenges, such as security, reconciliation with the Taliban and sustainable economic development.

Allow me to touch upon the third challenge, namely, sustainable economic development, especially in relation to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, which many speakers referred to today. Last month, Japan hosted an International Contact Group meeting in Tokyo. Participants affirmed that the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework will continue to serve as a reference for relations between donors and a new Afghan Government. As both presidential candidates have acknowledged, the future Government will have the responsibility to implement Afghanistan's commitments made in Tokyo. We look forward to seeing the tangible results of Afghanistan's efforts on the occasion of the follow-up ministerial meeting to be held in London in November 2014. We also hope that the London conference will serve as a venue for the Tokyo Framework to be shared by the new Afghan Government and the international community.

On a related note, we welcome the adoption today of a presidential statement on the issue of illicit drugs proposed by the Russian Federation (S/PRST/2014/12). When I served as Japanese Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, I had the pleasure of initiating a joint cooperation project between Japan and Russia on that issue. Under our joint efforts, 60 Afghan security agents have already received training on anti-narcotic law enforcement at the Police Academy in Moscow. We believe that such efforts are useful with a view to promoting the international cooperation that today's presidential statement calls for.

Let me conclude by referring to Japan's contributions to Afghanistan. Since 2001, we have contributed a total of $5.4 billion to Afghanistan for its development efforts. Japan is the second largest donor after the United States. At the Tokyo Conference in July 2012, the international community made a commitment to provide more than $16 billion through 2015. For its part, Japan has been steadily implementing its promise to provide up to $3 billion over five years. I would like to reaffirm our commitment to stand by the Government and the people of Afghanistan in their endeavours to achieve long-term stability.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Lambertini (Italy): We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ján Kubiš for his outstanding commitment to the democratization process in Afghanistan. We also thank the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Fedotov, and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, for their briefings.

Between now and the end of 2014, two crucial events will mark the course of Afghanistan's future. First, for the first time in the country's history, there will be a handover of power from one head of State to another based on a democratic process. Secondly, the completion of the transition process where a mission supporting the Afghan National Security Forces for training, advising and assisting will replace the International Security Assistance Force military presence.

The presidential run-off elections confirmed the positive trend arising from the first vote. The high turnout in the elections was a sign that Afghans, not giving into fear, trust the democratic process and have high expectations for a new President capable of tackling the country's problems.

The regularity of the entire election process, up until the announcement of the new Head of State, is critical. Only with the perception of a legitimate, credible, transparent and inclusive process will the outcome be accepted by the defeated opponents and public opinion and thus allow for a peaceful political transition with no upsets. The United Nations is directing its efforts towards that perspective by reiterating the absolute primacy of the election process, of the respect for its rules and regulations and of the importance of dialogue between the two candidates. In this delicate phase following the second round of voting, it is essential that both candidates and their supporters base their conduct on moderation and a sense of responsibility, avoid rushing to claim victory prematurely, and channel complaints through the appropriate mechanisms. That should be done with the awareness that the post-election period requires the country's utmost unity, with a view to its civil and economic development, to be nurtured by peace and stability.

The contribution of the Afghan National Security Forces was decisive in guaranteeing the regularity of the presidential and local elections, thus proving their capability in successfully overcoming the heavy, everyday challenge of controlling the country's territory. As to the insurgence, despite the higher number of attacks and victims on this occasion than during the first vote, once again attempts to derail the elections failed. Nonetheless, we must be aware that the stabilization of the country will take more time and that we cannot let our guard down.

In view of completing the transition process, the announcement by the United States on its future presence in Afghanistan and on the time table of the military withdrawal is welcome news. Clearly what remains instrumental for post-2014 assets is the signing of the bilateral security agreement between Afghanistan and the United States, to which both presidential candidates are receptive, and the finalizing of the necessary legal framework for the presence of NATO troops in the country.

Italy confirms its support for the peace process, recognizes Afghanistan's complete ownership and expects that it will not be affected by any setbacks in its gains in democratization and civil and gender rights, nor yield to terrorism. We reiterate our firm belief in the fact that, without an internal reconciliation in Afghanistan, there can be no prospects of stabilization, nor can any possible stabilization be long lasting without the genuine and determined contribution of the other regional actors.

In such a momentous stage of Afghanistan's process of stabilization and development, it is vital, for my country, to see that ambitions are not diminished and that there will be no sacrificing the quality and quantity of the benchmarks to be respected by the Kabul authorities. We expect our Afghan friends to remain committed to the Tokyo legacy and to reach clear and measurable goals in sectors such as the democratic and electoral processes, the fight against corruption, administrative and economic governance and human rights.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vrailas: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; and Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

I thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2014/420) and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ján Kubiš and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Yury Fedotov for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for his remarks.

I would like to reiterate our full support for the important role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and all the United Nations agencies in supporting the Afghan people and in coordinating the international community's assistance. The role of the United Nations will be even more important after 2014 in ensuring that the international community's assistance continues to reach people on the ground. It is vital that UNAMA's continued field presence be preserved.

Democracy and the rule of law are among the core values of the European Union. We are committed to supporting people's legitimate aspirations to freely and fairly elect the people that govern and represent them. In the past few months, we have seen the Afghan people repeatedly and bravely express their determination to have their say as to who the next President of the country will be. We pay tribute to the courage of people who ignored the threat of violence from groups who see the people's will as an anathema and women who defied the social conventions that continue to be conservative in many areas to assert their rights.

In all elections, every vote matters. Every vote counts. However, when people have shown this kind courage and determination to have their say, it is all the more vital that their votes and their will be fully reflected. It is therefore critical that the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission ensure that their workings are transparent. Candidates and voters need to be reassured that the processes are objective. In particular, the online publication of results from individual polling stations must be timely, and the guidelines for the recounting and auditing of votes should be consistently applied. Equally, it is essential that the candidates and their supporters allow the time and space for the institutions to perform their duties and exercise self-restraint in this delicate phase. It is important that both candidates act responsibly and direct any complaints through the appropriate mechanisms. Statements that prematurely claim victory or risk inflaming tensions should be avoided.

We look forward to working with the new President and his Government to address the critical challenges that remain in Afghanistan. I am pleased to announce that, on Monday, the European Union's Foreign Affairs Council endorsed a new comprehensive strategy for Afghanistan, which reiterates our continuing commitment to assist in addressing those remaining challenges.

Our aim is to support the development of Afghanistan's institutions to provide the resilience needed to safeguard the progress achieved to date and provide the platform for a more effective and ultimately sustainable Afghan State. The European Union and its member States provide more than $1 billion a year in aid to Afghanistan, making it the largest beneficiary of our assistance in the world. That shows that we are living up to the international aid pledges made at the Tokyo conference. However, to benefit from the full extent of those pledges, the new Government of Afghanistan also needs to show evidence of their reciprocal and lasting commitment. The new Afghan authorities must enact the political and economic reforms set out in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework — reforms that are so vital to the long-term political and economic sustainability of Afghanistan. Urgent action to restore economic confidence, establish a platform for growth and jobs and maximize revenue collection is imperative.

Security remains a pressing challenge in Afghanistan. The European Union asks the new President to reach out to all Afghans and neighbouring countries to invite them to contribute to the development of a stable, prosperous and fully sovereign Afghanistan, including through intensifying engagement in the Istanbul Process. We support an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process as a foundation for peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region. Such peace and stability in the region would be supported by collective action to address the continuing threat from drugs and organized crime. That should include urgent action to root out the corrupt networks that continue to grow rich as a result of the misery of others.

In conclusion, Afghanistan faces a new opportunity to address the fundamental issues that continue to threaten its stability and undermine its progress. I can assure the Council that the European Union will remain a steadfast ally in supporting champions of reform in order to ensure a better future for all Afghans — the sort of future they want and deserve.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Thoms (Germany): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš, Executive Director Fedotov and Ambassador Tanin for their respective statements.

I would like to align myself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

The year 2014 is crucial for Afghanistan. It should mark the first peaceful transfer of power in Afghan history. In the recent elections, millions of Afghan women and men have shown their commitment to actively shape the future of the country. They want their voices to be heard, and they want to see an end to violence.

I congratulate the voters on their courage in the face of threats and violence as well as the Afghan National Security Forces, which were well prepared and effective in securing the democratic process. We now call upon both presidential candidates to respect the authority of the Afghan Electoral Commission and to accept the final outcome once all complaints have been effectively adjudicated. I call to mind the statesmanship of the candidates, displayed in accepting the first round of results. The electoral process is not yet complete. As this is an Afghan-led process, we urge all stakeholders to promote national unity and to avoid appeals to ethnic, tribal or factional interests. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has stressed, at this critical juncture the need is for statesmanship, not gamesmanship.

The numerous positive developments in Afghanistan, including the elections on achievement first and foremost of the Afghan people and its institutions, will require our continued solidarity and commitment. This includes support for the Afghan National Security Forces. The signing of the relevant security arrangements by the new Afghan Government is a necessary condition for continued military support, including through the Resolute Support mission. As future international support will concentrate increasingly on civilian assistance, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will have a central role to play in coordinating those efforts in support of the new Afghan Government.

No doubt, grave challenges lie ahead. That should also caution us against overburdening UNAMA. The Mission needs to be adequately resourced and present throughout the country in order to fulfil its mandate. The new Afghan Government will face a host of significant challenges. We encourage our partners in Kabul to include all members of society, especially women, in decision-making processes and to continue all efforts to protect and promote human rights; to increase coordination and efficiency of international support; to promote national reconciliation and fight corruption as well as to implement its commitments under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework.

In conclusion, I wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš for his dynamic leadership and want to assure the Afghan people and the Secretary-General of Germany's steadfast support.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Ján Kubiš; the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yury Fedotov; and Ambassador Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for their statements.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union. I wish to add, in my national capacity, a number of considerations for this debate.

Spain reiterates its congratulations to the people of Afghanistan on holding the first round of the process to elect a new President of the Republic and new members of the provincial councils. We also commend them for the way in which they conducted the campaign and the voting in the second round, whose counting and legal processes have not yet been completed. These historic elections are critical to the ongoing transition process, and therefore to the future of Afghanistan. They were called to ensure the first democratic transfer of power in the presidency of the Republic, thereby completing the political transformation started 12 years ago by the Afghans, with the support of the international community.

It is important to highlight the exemplary behaviour of the Afghan people, who flocked to the polls with courage and resolve, defying the threats of those who sought to derail the ongoing transition. The statistics — which reflect a participation rate of approximately 60 per cent in the first round, with a 38 per cent share of female participation — make clear the strong commitment of the majority to the democratic process in the country. We also welcome the commitment to maintaining public order shown by the Afghan National Security Forces during the balloting.

It is vital that this process be completed successfully. All political actors and State institutions, particularly the electoral institutions, must show themselves worthy of the brave citizens who, with their overwhelming participation in the elections, bravely and resolutely outlined the future they want for the country — a future of democracy, peace and economic and social progress. It is therefore imperative that, with respect to the Constitution and laws of Afghanistan, all existing legal mechanisms be in place to ensure that the will of the people expressed at the polls is respected, and that the entire process be conducted in a peaceful, responsible and transparent manner.

For all these reasons, I wish to join Spain's voice to those who have spoke before me in reiterating the call on all actors — the candidates, the voters and the institutions — to maintain to the end the exemplary behaviour they showed in the early phases of the electoral process.

For more than a decade, Spain has been strongly committed to Afghanistan and the Afghans. Through our development cooperation, which made Afghanistan a priority target; the activities of our provincial reconstruction team in Qala-e-Naw; and our support for the country's security and the training of its security forces, Spain has responded to requests from Afghans and assisted them in their process of nation-building. Many significant challenges remain. Afghans can count on Spain to remain at its side, as always, and support them in their efforts to build a stable, prosperous, democratic Afghanistan that cooperates with its neighbours and remains fully sovereign.

I cannot conclude without reiterating Spain's gratitude and support for the role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to date and that it is still expected to play in support of the decisions and goals of the people of Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Ms. Freimane-Deksne (Latvia): Latvia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and would like to make a few remarks in its national capacity.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2014/420) and his Special Representative Ján Kubiš and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) team for their dedication and continued support for the people of Afghanistan in fulfilling the tasks of the Mission.

First of all, Latvia acknowledges the remarkable achievements Afghanistan has made in the past decade, starting from very difficult circumstances. It is imperative that the progress be sustained in order for Afghanistan to emerge stronger after the transformation decade.

Latvia supports an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process. Inclusive and orderly Afghan-led and Afghan-run elections, with a legitimate process and outcome that are accepted by all, are vital to consolidating democracy in Afghanistan and tackling the country's political, economic and security challenges. Substantial progress has already been made by the Government, the electoral bodies, the Afghan National Security Forces, and the electorate in the preparations for the elections and during the elections. Latvia particularly welcomes the measures taken to ensure the higher participation of women and the results achieved in this regard. Now, at this critical juncture for Afghanistan, everybody should assume their responsibilities for establishing a strong foundation for national unity and stability, and avoid any tensions.

Regional cooperation is crucial to the long-term stability and economic development of Afghanistan and the region as a whole, including Central Asia. Latvia welcomes regional initiatives, in particular the Istanbul Process. The active and constructive engagement of all participants ahead of and after the Ministerial Conference in China in August is important for sustained progress in developing cooperation and building confidence between Afghanistan and its neighbours. Latvia commends the support expressed at the highest level by China, India, Iran and Pakistan for a smooth political transition in Afghanistan and for constructive regional cooperation. We believe that infrastructure projects that strengthen regional connectivity greatly contribute to regional cooperation and economic development. Afghanistan has made remarkable progress in this regard.

In order to contribute to those efforts, on 3 and 4 June Latvia hosted a high-level conference on transport, logistics and trade routes on the theme "Connecting Asia with Europe", which this year gathered over 400 participants, including Government officials, foreign policy experts and representatives of transport and logistics companies from countries of the Far East, South and Central Asia and Afghanistan, as well as from partner countries in the China and Central and Eastern European Cooperation Programme. Among the high-level participants, we were also pleased to welcome the Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation of Afghanistan.

The participants agreed that the synchronization of infrastructure projects was important for long-term stability and growth and that infrastructure projects at the national level must be compatible with regional developments in transportation, logistics and trade. During its presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2015, Latvia will continue to promote closer cooperation with the countries of Central Asia, the Far East and South Asia. In order to further develop

our common vision, Latvia will host the next annual high-level conference in April 2015. Latvia will also continue to contribute to capacity-building for Afghan railroad and aviation experts.

Continued international support and cooperation with Afghanistan are important for achieving sustainable long-term progress. Mutual commitments made at the NATO Chicago Summit and the Tokyo Conference are the basis for partnership between Afghanistan and the international community, matching international political, security and financial support with a clear Afghan commitment to sustained reform. At the same time, appropriate legal frameworks should be in place to enable the international community to provide support in the security sphere after 2014 as well. Latvia has already pledged its support for the Afghan National Security Forces as of 2015.

Sustained economic growth and a State-building process that is founded on the principles of good governance, the rule of law and human rights, especially the rights of women and children, should be the basis for a democratic, prosperous and stable Afghanistan. This is a crucial moment and an opportunity for Afghanistan and all its citizens to build on the progress made and to ensure long-term peace, security and stability in the country. We should build a true long-term partnership, led by Afghanistan and based on mutual commitments to ensuring progress and sustained momentum. Let me reassure the Council of Latvia's ongoing involvement in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Kydyrov (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like, at the outset, to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ján Kubiš; the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Yury Fedotov; and Ambassador Tanin for their substantive statements.

I have the honour today to speak on behalf of the member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The CSTO member States support the role of the United Nations in coordinating international efforts to support Afghanistan. We endorse the approach of the Afghan leadership to ensure the country's progress towards peace, stability, prosperity and broad cooperation with regional neighbours.

We pay tribute to the efforts of the Afghan people themselves, who have striven in the face of numerous challenges to determine their own future and to assume ownership of their own development and security. In that context, we note the successful holding of the second round of the presidential elections on 14 June. We hope that at this historic turning-point in their country's history, the people of Afghanistan will come together to address the challenges and ensure the equality of all, respect for the law and the rights of various groups, and justice and harmony.

The member States of the CSTO fully support the efforts of the Afghan Government to move towards national reconciliation. We suggest that this process should be carried out under the leadership of Kabul and on the basis of three well-known principles, namely, that the rebels must lay down their arms, recognize the Constitution of Afghanistan and sever their ties to Al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations.

The member States of the CSTO are convinced that it will not be possible to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan in the long term or to effectively address the challenges facing the country without a comprehensive approach to existing problems. We are gravely concerned by the surge in the activities of the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other terrorist and extremist groups, illegal armed bands and criminal elements, and in particular by their spread to the northern regions of the country, which directly affects the interests of this Organization in that zone. A major challenge at this stage is clearly the problem of illegal drug production and drug trafficking. The strong connection between terrorism and illegal Afghan drug production is particulary alarming, because it undermines Afghan achievements in the sphere of security and its capacity to ensure law and order in the country. We note with concern funding and support for terrorist activities, including income from the cultivation, production and trafficking in illicit narcotics as a country of origin or transit, which Afghanistan is, as well as illicit delivery to the country of precursors.

The member States of the CSTO also express their concern at the growth in the production of opium poppy that was noted in the report *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2013*, published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The cultivation, production, illegal trafficking and consumption of opium in Afghanistan continue to pose a serious threat to stability, security, socioeconomic development and governance in thatcountry, the region and the world as a whole. The member States of the CSTO strongly belive

that the production, trade and trafficking of illicit drugs from Afghanstan represent a threat to international stability and provide a breeding ground for international terrorism and organized crime. Combating the drug threat is one of the main components for achieving stability and security in Afghanistan and is an intrinsic part of our overall efforts to combat the terrorist threat, including a possible worsening of the situation given the upcoming withdrawal from the country this year of the International Security Assistance Force.

We support the important role of United Nations agencies and UNODC in monitoring the drug situation in Afghanistan and in helping to ensure security, stability and socioeconomic developent in the country. A significant contribution to addressing that can be made by bolstering bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Afghanistan and other countries in the region. We reiterate our commitment to combating the illicit drug trade and using the potential of regional cooperational to combat Afghan drug trafficking. We therefore accord great importance to the specialized regional structures that work closely with UNODC. In November 2007, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for monitoring trafficking in illicit substances and their precursors was established in Almaty.

The member States of the CSTO reiterate their readiness to continue to support Afghanistan's counter-narcotic efforts, including by training specialists for law enforcement structures at national training centres, providing necessary equipment and maintaining the permanent anti-narcotics mechanism Operation Canal, which was set up as part of the preventive operations established under the aegis of the CSTO. We are ready to enhance cooperation with the Afghan people, United Nations specialized agencies, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other interested parties. We call for enhancing international and regional cooperation in order to effectively and jointly counteract the drug threat emerging from Afghanistan, in line with the principle of common and shared responsibility. We express our readiness to use the potential of the coordinated work of the CSTO in our foreign policy in order to enhance security and stability in Afghanistan and in the region as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Eler (Turkey): I would like to thank Special Representative Kubiš and Executive Director Fedotov for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for his remarks.

Afghanistan today stands at a crucial crossroads, with key political, security and economic transformation processes under way. Turkey believes that Afghanistan's future should be based on a conscious strategy that draws strength from local ownership and leadership and seeks to pull together various strands of efforts into a meaningful whole. The success of those efforts is vital for a peaceful, secure and stable Afghanistan that can effectively serve the needs of its people.

The most important step in this direction has been taken with the conduct of the presidential and provincial elections. The enthusiastic voter participation amidst grave security risks demonstrated the will of the Afghan people to assume the ownership of their own country. Turkey believes that despite the fragile political and security atmosphere, the Afghan electoral institutions — particularly the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission — have the necessary capacity to handle any impasse or obstacle that might arise in the election process, and trust that a successful political transition will take place. We also believe that all stakeholders will act responsibly and exercise self-restraint. At this vital juncture, the international community should keep investing in positive scenarios for the future of the country.

The successful continuation of Afghan-led peace and reconciliation efforts will constitute another important step towards security, stability and political transition. Turkey has supported from the outset the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, with the High Peace Council at the core. We are fully aware of the difficulties and challenges of the process. In this context, we strongly condemn the attack last week on the head of the secretariat of the High Peace Council, Mr. Stanekzai, and hope that those responsible will be swiftly brought to justice. We would also like to stress that the increasing trend of civilian casualties is worrisome, and increased attention to this phenomenon is needed.

We are glad to observe the increasing regional awareness and ownership related to finding sustainable solutions to the problems of Afghanistan. As international forces withdraw, regional cooperation and commitment become increasingly vital to transforming the region into a zone of peace, stability and prosperity. Based on this vision, the region must come together to

transform common problems into mutual interests. In this context, we appreciate all bilateral and multilateral dialogue and cooperation efforts, and welcome the positive momentum that has been reached in the Istanbul Process. We look forward to the next Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference in China in August.

To conclude, I would like to voice our strong support for the crucial and comprehensive role the United Nations and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan will continue to play in supporting Afghanistan during and after the transition. Our commitment to the needs of the United Nations in Afghanistan is insurance for protecting the achievements of the past 13 years on the ground. Turkey will always remain in solidarity with the Afghan people and continue to contribute to a safe, secure and prosperous Afghanistan, as we have done for many decades.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.